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THE TRUMAN-MacARTHUR CONTROVERSY:

**A STUDY IN
POLITICAL-MILITARY RELATIONS**

**A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements of the
degree**

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the individual student author and do not necessarily represent the views of either the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to determine the political-military relationship between the Truman Administration and General of the Army Douglas MacArthur during the Korean War. Particular attention was directed to those factors resulting in the relief of General MacArthur in April of 1951. The study was conducted through the medium of library research to include a search of the official documents on this subject at the Harry S. Truman Library and the use of a draft manuscript on the subject from the Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army. The results of the study indicate that MacArthur considered that the Administration's "limited war" policy in Korea was appeasement and as a result he did not fully support Administration policies in the conduct of the Korean War. MacArthur's public statements against the Administration's policy in Korea were not only embarrassing to President Truman and his advisors, but confused their allies as to what the true U.S. foreign policy was in Korea. When General MacArthur refused to heed Administration restrictions in making public statements on U.S. foreign and military policy he was relieved of all of his duties in the Far East by President Truman.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On 11 April 1951 President Harry Truman sent General Douglas MacArthur the following message:

I deeply regret that it becomes my duty as President and Commander in Chief of the United States Military Forces to replace you as Supreme Commander, Allied Powers; Commander in Chief, United Nations Command; Commander in Chief, Far East; and Commanding General United States Army, Far East. You will turn over your Commands, effective at once, to Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway.¹

The abrupt dismissal of a "national hero" of such stature as General of the Army Douglas MacArthur created considerable furor among the American public and in the halls of Congress. The method of relief was severely criticized by Congress, the press, and the public. The dismissal became embroiled in a much larger discussion on the Administration's policy in the Far East and soon took on decided political overtones, both in the protracted hearings on the subject before the joint session of the Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Relations of the United States Senate, and in the public media. While it was generally conceded that President

¹James F. Schnabel, Policy and Direction: The First Year, U.S. Army in the Korean War (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, forthcoming), p. XX-1.

Truman had the constitutional right to relieve General MacArthur there was considerable indignation as to the method and propriety of the relief. Much impassioned oratory and rhetoric was advanced by both the advocates of the Administration and General MacArthur. This public debate was never adequately concluded in the minds of many persons and continued as a political issue in to the 1952 Presidential and Congressional elections.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the events leading to the dismissal of General MacArthur and to determine the political and/or military reasons for his relief. The results of the study will be portrayed in the following chapters as follows:

1. A brief sketch of the protagonists in the Truman-MacArthur controversy.
2. A summary of United States interests and involvement in Korea prior to the North Korean invasion of South Korea in June of 1950.
3. A detailed discussion of the Administration's basic policy concerning the Korean conflict and its directions to General MacArthur on the conduct of the war. Special emphasis will be directed to those areas of disagreement and conflict between the Administration and General MacArthur.
4. A brief comment on the public and private reaction to the MacArthur relief and its aftermath.
5. Conclusions.

The next two chapters (Chapters II and III) are both introductory in nature and are devoted to giving the reader a brief biographical sketch of the main participants in the study and a summary of the events leading up to the Korean War.

CHAPTER II

THE PROTAGONISTS

This chapter discusses the principal actors involved in the Truman-MacArthur controversy. A brief biographical sketch of each man is provided followed by a comment on the relationship between General MacArthur and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

HARRY S. TRUMAN¹

Mr. Truman was born 8 May 1884 in Lamar, Missouri. After graduation from high school he obtained an appointment to West Point but was rejected because of his poor eyesight. During the decade prior to World War I he was employed as a timekeeper, a bookkeeper and a farmer on the family farm and also served in his first political job, that of "road overseer" in Washington township in Missouri.

From 1905 to 1911 Truman had been an enlisted member of the Missouri National Guard and shortly after the start of World War I he was sworn in as a first lieutenant of the Missouri National Guard and received additional training at

¹Unless otherwise indicated the source for this section is Drake DeKay, "Truman, Harry S.," Encyclopedia Americana (1964), XXVII, pp. 174-76.

the Field Artillery School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He helped organize the 2d Regiment of Missouri Field Artillery which, when federalized, became the 129th United States Field Artillery, a component of the 35th Division. Truman stayed with the regiment when it was sent to France in 1918 serving as adjutant of the 2d Battalion and commander of Battery D of the 2d Battalion. When the war ended Truman was mustered out as a captain. He kept his ties with the military however, becoming a major in the reserve and being promoted to colonel in 1927.

After the war Mr. Truman tried his hand as a businessman in partnership with a regimental comrade, but within two years the business failed. An indication of the integrity of Mr. Truman was that he never declared bankruptcy (which he was legally allowed to do) and over the next fifteen years paid off all the indebtedness caused by the business failure. He soon became active again in politics, being elected as one of the judges (actually a county commissioner) of the Jackson County Court in Missouri. He was defeated for reelection in 1924 but was reelected two years later (1926) as presiding judge of the same court, a position in which he served for eight years.

In 1934 Truman ran for the U.S. Senate and was elected. During his first term he was particularly active in efforts to build up the armed forces. After being re-elected in 1940 Mr. Truman headed a special subcommittee to

investigate defense spending. It is estimated that his subcommittee saved the taxpayers \$200,000,000. In 1944 he was nominated for and elected vice-president under President Roosevelt. Upon the death of Roosevelt 83 days later Truman became the 33d President of the United States.

As President, Truman authorized the use of the atomic bomb in Japan, was active in the reconstruction of Europe, and supported efforts to curtail the expansion of communism in Europe and Asia. In 1946 the Republicans gained control of both houses of Congress and it was predicted (almost unanimously) that Truman would not be reelected in 1948. The pollsters were wrong and Mr. Truman was reelected for a second term.

During his years in public service Mr. Truman earned a reputation for being an honest and efficient administrator. He was dedicated to public service, and because of his efficiency and honesty, inevitably made some enemies. He was a volatile man and could become very angry when he felt he had been wronged, especially with regards to his family. If Mr. Truman were to be cited for any particular shortcoming it would probably be his extreme loyalty to his associates. On several occasions he and his administration were embarrassed by associates who should have been previously relieved because of professional or personal reasons. He, however, was not afraid to shoulder responsibility as evidenced by the sign on his desk in the White

House which read, "This Is Where The Buck Stops."

DOUGLAS MAC ARTHUR²

Douglas MacArthur was born on 26 January 1880 in Little Rock, Arkansas. He was the son of an illustrious army officer (Lieutenant General Arthur MacArthur, the "Boy Colonel" of the Civil War) and an ambitious mother. He graduated from West Point with the highest scholastic average of any student in 25 years. He was an extremely able commander and staff officer and just prior to World War I was a major working in the general staff in Washington. During World War I he was promoted to colonel and made chief of staff of the 42d (Rainbow) Division. In 1918 he was promoted to brigadier general and served as a brigade commander in the 42d Division, and for a short while as its division commander. He was retained in general grade status after World War I (a feat in that the majority of the newly promoted generals were reduced in grade back to field grade) serving in the Army of Occupation in Germany. In 1919 was appointed Superintendent of West Point, a post which he held until 1922. As Superintendent he was instrumental in modernizing the training and broadening the curriculum to include full collegiate education. From 1922 to 1925 he served in various commands

²Unless otherwise indicated the source for this section is "MacArthur, Douglas," Encyclopedia Americana (1964) XVIII, pp. 9-9a.

in the Philippines, returning to the United States as a major general in 1925 to command a corps on the east coast. In 1930 he was named by President Hoover to receive his fourth star (making him the youngest general, at 50 years old, since Grant) and was named as Army Chief of Staff, a post he held for four years. In 1935 he was appointed military advisor to the Philippine Commonwealth government to build up the island's defenses and to organize a native army. He went on the retired list in 1938, remaining in his post in the Philippines.

In 1941 he was recalled to active duty as a lieutenant general and named commander of the Far East Command. After the outbreak of World War II he was promoted to full general and given command of all United States forces in the Far East. In 1942 he was appointed Commander in Chief of all Allied forces in the Southeast Pacific area. He conducted a brilliant island hopping campaign in the Pacific culminating with the defeat of Japan in 1945. He was promoted to the rank of General of the Army (5 star) in December 1944. At the end of the war he was designated as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in Japan, a post he held until 1951.

During his military career, General MacArthur had earned a reputation for personal bravery and brilliance. In addition to numerous other awards, both U.S. and foreign, for bravery and service, he had, like his father, received the Congressional Medal of Honor. It must be noted however that over his many years of service MacArthur had developed an

inordinate sense of his own destiny and infallibility and had earned a reputation for being aloof, arrogant and overly sensitive.

PROTAGONISTS WITH LESSER ROLES

Dean Acheson³

Mr. Acheson was born on 11 April 1893 in Middletown, Connecticut. He graduated from Yale in 1915 and started his law studies at Harvard, receiving a law degree in 1918. During World War I his studies were interrupted for a short period for duty as an ensign. After the war he spent two years as a private secretary to Louis D. Brandeis, Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. From 1921 to 1933 he practiced corporation and international law. In 1933 President Roosevelt appointed him as Undersecretary of the Treasury, a post from which he resigned a year later as a result of an argument on a gold purchase plan. He returned to his private law practice until 1941 when he was recalled to public service as Assistant Secretary of State. In 1945 he was named Undersecretary of State and remained so until 1 July 1947. In 1949 he was named Secretary of State. Mr. Truman had great faith in the abilities and judgment of Mr. Acheson.

³Unless otherwise indicated the source for this section is "Acheson, Dean J.," Encyclopedia Americana (1964), I, 81.

George C. Marshall⁴

General Marshall was born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania on 31 December 1880. He graduated from VMI in 1901 and entered active duty in the Army. He served in various troop and school assignments prior to World War I earning a reputation as an outstanding military strategist. In World War I he served chiefly as a staff officer and gained prominence as a tactician and a trainer. After the war he served as an aide to General Pershing and then had various troop and school assignments, among them being the assistant Commandant of the Infantry School from 1928 to 1932. He was promoted to brigadier general in 1936 and in 1938 became assistant Chief of Staff of the Army. In 1939 he was appointed Army Chief of Staff and promoted to general. He directed the buildup for World War II and received great praise for his strategic direction of the war. He was promoted to five star rank in December 1944. After the war he was made special envoy to China and upon his return in 1947 was appointed as Secretary of State. He is well known as the designer of the Marshall Plan and is the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. Because of poor health he resigned as Secretary of State in 1949. Shortly after the outbreak of the Korean War he was named Secretary of Defense.

⁴Unless otherwise indicated the source for this section is "Marshall, George Catlett," Encyclopedia Americana (1964), XVIII, pp. 325-26.

Omar N. Bradley⁵

General Bradley was born on 12 February 1893 in Clark, Missouri. He graduated from West Point in 1915. He did not see any enemy action in World War I. After the war he spent time as a PMS at South Dakota State College and from 1920 to 1924 was a mathematics instructor at West Point. He became the first of his class (1915) to make brigadier general when he was promoted to that rank in February 1941 at age 48. In 1942 he was promoted to major general and served successively as Division Commander of the 82d and the 28th Infantry Divisions in the States. He went to Europe in 1943 as field aide to General Eisenhower and in April of that year succeeded General Patton as Commander of the II U.S. Corps. In June he was promoted to lieutenant general. In 1944 he was given command of all American troops in the invasion of Europe and promoted to general. After the war he served as head of the Veterans Administration and as Army Chief of Staff in 1948-49. In 1949 he was appointed as the first permanent chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).

J. Lawton Collins⁶

General Collins was born in New Orleans, Louisiana on 1 May 1896. He graduated from West Point in 1917 but did not

⁵Unless otherwise indicated the source for this section is "Bradley, Omar Nelson," Encyclopedia Americana (1964), IV, 388.

⁶Unless otherwise indicated the source for this section is "Collins, J. Lawton," Encyclopedia Americana (1964), VII, 268.

see action in World War I. He served in various staff and command assignments between the two world wars. He was promoted to brigadier general in February 1942 while Chief of Staff of the Hawaiian Department. In May of the same year he was promoted to major general and given command of the 25th Infantry Division. He commanded the division for two years in the Pacific to include action at Guadalcanal. In 1945 he was promoted to lieutenant general and led VII Corps in Europe, earning the nickname of "Lightning Joe." In 1948 he was promoted to general and in 1949 was appointed Army Chief of Staff when General Bradley became Chairman of the JCS.

RELATIONSHIP OF MAC ARTHUR TO THE JCS

Brigadier General Lynn D. Smith, in an article in Army Magazine on the Inchon invasion gives an interesting comparison between the JCS and General MacArthur. He commented:

. . . There was an expansive generation gap in age, seniority and fame between General Douglas MacArthur and the members of the JCS. Born on 26 January 1880, MacArthur graduated from West Point in 1903 after having made a cadet record that has yet to be matched. Omar N. Bradley was then 10 years old. In 1917, when J. Lawton Collins graduated from the Military Academy, MacArthur was chief of staff of the 42d Infantry Division in France. After World War I, when Hoyt Vandenberg was a cadet at West Point, Gen. MacArthur was the superintendent. In 1950, the majority of the JCS was Army or recently Army: Gen. Bradley, chairman; Gen. Collins, chief of staff of the Army; and Gen. Vandenberg, chief

of staff of the Air Force. But the senior officer in the Army was Douglas MacArthur⁷

Later on in the article General Smith related this bit of satirical humor:

. . . Action officers from the Pentagon who visited Tokyo told their colleagues at GHQ, only half in jest, that in Washington when the screen from Tokyo read "Present here: C-in-C" those in the Pentagon came to their feet.⁸

⁷Lynn D. Smith, "A Nickel After a Dollar," Army, Vol. 20, No. 9 (September, 1970), 30. Although General Smith did not address any comparison between General MacArthur and Mr. Truman or General Marshall, the following comparisons could be made. During World War I, though only four years older than Mr. Truman, General MacArthur reached the rank of Brigadier General and served briefly as a division commander while Mr. Truman attained the rank of Captain and commanded an artillery battery. General Marshall, though only a year younger than MacArthur only attained the rank of colonel during World War I and reverted to the rank of major after the war while General MacArthur retained his grade of general. In 1930, when General MacArthur received his fourth star and was designated Army Chief of Staff, Mr. Truman was a presiding judge in a county court and Marshall was still a colonel serving as Assistant Commandant at the Infantry School.

⁸Ibid., The "screen" mentioned in the quote was a projection of the teletype copy on a large screen in the Pentagon Operation Center thus, enabling a number of people to observe the on-going teletype discussions with headquarters throughout the world.

CHAPTER III

WHY KOREA?

Korea has had a long history of subjugation. Its geographical location has made it vulnerable to expansionist policies of its three powerful neighbors, China, Japan, and Russia. Since before the coming of Christ, Korea has alternately been ruled or controlled by one of the three, with very few periods of self-rule being recorded. In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century Japan wrested control of Korea by defeating the Chinese in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 and Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. Japan then took complete control of the country and in 1910 formally annexed Korea into the Japanese Empire.¹

During the next thirty-five years of absolute Japanese rule Korea's land and people were exploited by the Japanese. The Japanese integrated the Korean economy into their own, making Korea dependent on Japan for much of its manufactured goods, repair parts, and as a market for its goods. Koreans were banned from responsible positions in the

¹James F. Schnabel, Policy and Direction: The First Year, U.S. Army in the Korean War (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, forthcoming), pp. 1-3 to 1-6.

country and were not afforded many educational opportunities. During the years between the two World Wars nationalist groups vainly sought Korean independence. The two main groups were the Korean Provisional Government, headed by Dr. Syngman Rhee and Mr. Kim Koo, and a strong Korean Communist party.²

KOREAN INDEPENDENCE

During World War II the question of independence for Korea was taken up by the Allies. After the Cairo Conference of December 1943 the United States, the United Kingdom, and China made a joint statement, which said in part,

The aforesaid three great powers, mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent.

This was confirmed by the Potsdam Conference in July of 1945 and further subscribed to by the Soviet Union shortly thereafter.³ During this period the United States attached little strategic importance to Korea except that it realized that the occupation of Korea by an unfriendly power could hamper the occupation of Japan and restrict movement in that area. Conversely though, the Soviet Union considered Korea as a strategic area, and, as subsequent events proved, would not countenance control of Korea by another power.⁴

²Ibid., pp. I-8 to I-11.

³H.R. Rep. No. 2495, 81st Cong., 2d Sess., pp. 1, 2 (1950).

⁴Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. I-12 and I-13.

Upon Russia's entry into the war against Japan on 9 August 1945, and the offer of Japanese surrender on the following day, it was necessary that our military planners recommend a dividing line in Korea for acceptance of the Japanese surrender in Korea by the United States' and Russian forces. Due to political considerations and the lack of any United States forces in Korea, the 38th parallel was selected to facilitate the Japanese surrender in Korea.⁵

This arbitrary surrender line was never intended to become a long-term demarcation line for the division or occupation of Korea. From the time United States forces entered Korea in September of 1945, negotiations were started with the Soviets to eliminate this artificial boundary and to unite the country under a Four Power occupation. However, after almost two years of fruitless discussions with the U.S.S.R. on uniting Korea, the United States referred the Korean independence question to the second regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on 17 September 1947. On 14 November 1947 the General Assembly adopted a resolution for elections to be held not later than 31 March 1948 throughout Korea under the observation of a United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea. The Russians refused

⁵Ibid., pp. I-14 to I-22; see also U.S., The Department of State, Korea: 1945 to 1948, Department of State Publication No. 3705 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1948), pp. 3, 4.

to take part in the United Nations Commission and further refused to allow the commission to enter its zone.⁶

On 10 May 1948 elections were held in South Korea under the observation of the United Nations Temporary Commission to select a National Assembly. The National Assembly, with Syngman Rhee as its elected chairman, drafted a democratic constitution for South Korea and established a national government. Syngman Rhee was elected as the first President of the Republic of Korea and the new republic assumed authority over South Korea on 15 August 1948. On 25 August 1948 elections were held in North Korea to select delegates to the Supreme People's Council. These elections were not observed by the United Nations Commission and information gathered from secondary sources stated the elections were not in accordance with the 14 November 1947 General Assembly resolution. On 9 September 1948 the Supreme People's Council proclaimed the establishment of a "Democratic People's Republic of Korea" claiming jurisdiction over the entire country.⁷

On 12 December 1948 the United Nations General Assembly established the United Nations Commission on Korea to promote unification of Korea under a representative

⁶ Department of State, Korea: 1945 to 1948, pp. 4-13.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

government. In addition they again recommended that the occupying powers withdraw their occupation forces from Korea as early as practicable.⁸ On 25 December 1948 the Soviet Government announced that they had completely withdrawn their occupation forces from North Korea, a claim which the United Nations Commission was not able to verify due to the North Korean Government not allowing the commission north of the 38th parallel.⁹ After a thorough review by the Department of State, the Department of Defense and the National Security Council it was decided, with the approval of the President, to withdraw United States occupation forces from Korea. The withdrawal was completed on 29 June 1949 leaving only a United States Military Advisory Group of approximately 500 officers and men. In October 1949 the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution which continued the United Nations Commission on Korea and directed it to, "observe and report any developments which might lead to or otherwise involve military conflict in Korea."¹⁰

⁸H.R. Rep. No. 2495, p. 18; see also U.S., The Department of State, The Conflict in Korea: Events Prior to the Attack on June 25, 1950, Department of State Publication No. 4266 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951), p. 5.

⁹Information available to the State Department indicated that the withdrawal was actually made, leaving however, a military mission of considerable size. Department of State, The Conflict in Korea, p. 6.

Id., p. 7.

MILITARY ADVISORY EFFORT IN KOREA

Shortly after accepting the Japanese surrender in Korea, General MacArthur was instructed to prepare plans to organize a police-type force in Korea to reduce the requirements for United States occupation forces in Korea. General MacArthur's plans called for a South Korean police force of approximately 25,000 men and by the end of 1947 the police force, now designated the Korean Constabulary, was at a strength of 20,000 men. Very few American advisors were made available to work with the new police force and the Commander of the United States Armed Forces in Korea (USAFIK) did not actively push the buildup of the constabulary because of his concern about the political reliability of the newly formed forces.¹¹

In November 1948, President Rhee formally asked for a United States military mission and shortly thereafter the Republic of Korea created a department of national defense and redesignated its constabulary as an army. In March of 1949 the United States agreed to support, and equip, a Korean army of 65,000 men. During 1949 the Army was organized into eight divisions and United States advisors were furnished to most battalions. On 1 July 1949 the military mission (up to this time under the control of General MacArthur's headquarters) was redesignated as the United States Military

¹¹Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. 11-33, 11-34.

Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea (KMAG) and was assigned to the American Mission in Korea (AMIK). The AMIK was not a part of General MacArthur's command and the only responsibility MacArthur had to AMIK was some logistical support and development of contingency plans for the evacuation of United States nationals from Korea in an emergency. Thus, during the year preceeding the North Korean invasion of South Korea General MacArthur had virtually no control over, and little responsibility for Korea.¹²

The Republic of Korea forces were very lightly equipped. They had no heavy artillery, tanks, or combat aircraft. General MacArthur had felt that the Republic of Korea Army should be strong enough to maintain internal security within the republic but not so strong that it provided a plausible basis for allegations of being a threat to North Korea.¹³ In August 1949 President Rhee asked President Truman for additional equipment and ammunition and more artillery but all President Truman could do was to assure Rhee he would continue to make recommendations to Congress

¹²Ibid., pp. II-38 to II-40.

¹³Ibid., p. II-40. In his reminiscences, however, General MacArthur was to blame this decision on the State Department. He stated that the decision was, "... a curiously myopic reasoning that, of course, opened the way for a North Korean attack. It was a vital and fatal error not to prepare South Korea to meet an attack from the north. The potential of such an attack was inherent in the fact that the North Korean forces had tanks, heavy artillery, and fighter aircraft with which South Korea was not equipped." MacArthur, Reminiscences, pp. 328-30.

for more military aid funds for Korea. On 26 January 1950 the two governments signed a military assistance agreement for substantial aid to Korea but almost none of the aid had arrived in Korea prior to the 25 June 1950 invasion by North Korea.¹⁴

The United States government was not united on its evaluation of the effectiveness of the Republic of Korea Army. The chief of KMAG believed the Republic of Korea Army was stronger than the North Korean Army. Ambassador Muccio, head of the American Mission in Korea, on the other hand, was quite emphatic when he stated that the materiel superiority of the North Korean forces in heavy infantry support weapons, tanks, and combat aircraft made the North Koreans much stronger if they elected to make any full-scale invasion of the South Korean republic.¹⁵

COLLECTIVE SECURITY AND CONTAINMENT

Soon after the end of World War II the United States adopted a policy of containment of Russia and encouraged collective security. The Truman Doctrine was enunciated by President Truman in early 1947 when he stated in part:

I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way.

¹⁴Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. II-40 to II-45.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. II-41 to II-45 and II-50 to II-53.

I believe our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes.

The world is not static, and the status quo is not sacred. But we cannot allow changes in the status quo in violation of the Charter of the United Nations by such methods as coercion, or by such subterfuges as political infiltration. In helping free and independent nations to maintain their freedom, the United States will be giving effect to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations . . .¹⁶

The doctrine was first used as a basis to provide aid to Greece and Turkey to prevent the former's takeover by communist guerrillas and the latter succumbing to the threat of Soviet arms. The Truman Doctrine was followed by the Marshall Plan which was designed to place the Western European countries on their feet and thereby prevent further communist penetration into these countries. In early 1948 the Western European allies signed the Brussels Defense Pact which triggered restrictions on allied rail and road traffic into Berlin, and later the Berlin Blockade. This was met with determined resolve and the Berlin Airlift. In April of 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty was signed further pledging the United States to collective security.¹⁷

THE FAR EAST

During the period 1946 to 1949 China was an explosive political issue in the United States. Despite vast amounts

¹⁶Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1969), p. 222.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 220-284.

of economic and military assistance to Nationalist China during this period, by the end of 1949 the Chinese Communists had gained control of mainland China and the Nationalist Chinese had retreated to the island of Formosa.¹⁸ Since 1948 the American policy on the defense of Formosa had been that United States forces would not be used to defend Formosa but that diplomatic and economic means would be utilized to prevent the island from falling under control of a power hostile to the United States. With the defeat of Nationalist China on the Chinese mainland there was considerable doubt whether Formosa could be maintained by diplomatic and economic measures alone. Because of this, certain members of Congress advocated that the United States provide military assistance and naval protection for Formosa, but the policy was not changed by the Administration and remained as stated above until the advent of the Korean War.¹⁹ President Truman on 5 January 1950 stated that the United States Government regarded Formosa as Chinese territory and went on to say:

The United States has no predatory designs on Formosa or on any other Chinese territory. The United States has no desire to obtain special rights or privileges or to establish military bases on Formosa at this time. Nor does it have any intention of utilizing its armed forces to interfere in the present situation. The United States Government will not pursue a course which will lead to involvement in the civil conflict in China.

Similarly, the United States Government will not provide military aid or advice to Chinese forces on Formosa.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 302-07.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 349-50.

In the view of the United States Government, the resources on Formosa are adequate to enable them to obtain the items which they might consider necessary for the defense of the Island. The United States Government proposes to continue under existing legislative authority the present ECA program of economic assistance.²⁰

On 12 January 1950, Secretary of State Acheson made a speech before the National Press Club. In it he explained the Administration's view on the defeat of Nationalist China and also delineated our vital interests in the Pacific and specified our defensive perimeter in that area. He stated, "This defensive perimeter runs along the Aleutians to Japan and then goes to the Ryukyus."²¹ Secretary Acheson went on to add:

So far as the military security of areas in the Pacific is concerned, it must be clear that no person can guarantee these areas against military attack . . .

Should such an attack occur . . . the initial reliance must be on the people attacked to resist it and then upon the commitments of the entire civilized world under the Charter of the United Nations, which so far has not proved a weak reed to lean on by any people who are determined to protect their independence against outside aggression.²²

It must be noted that the specified defensive perimeter did not include Formosa or Korea.

²⁰Ibid., p. 351.

²¹Ibid., p. 357. This defensive perimeter was the same that General MacArthur had specified in an interview reported in the New York Times ten months earlier (2 March 1949). Ibid., p. 357.

²²Ibid., p. 357.

SITUATION IN KOREA - JUNE 1950

Thus, we have the setting for the attack on South Korea. The United States had withdrawn its military forces from Korea leaving behind only a small military mission. To an outsider it would seem that the United States did not consider Korea as one of its vital interests. The United States had publicly stated that it would not defend Korea with United States forces and further stated that Korea did not lie within its defensive perimeter in the Pacific. In January of 1950 a minor aid bill for Korea was defeated by the Congress seemingly indicating the further lack of importance of Korea to the United States. This was corrected in February with the adding of a Korean appropriation to the China Aid Act, but, in the words of Secretary Acheson, ". . . the damage had been done."²³ As LTC Schnabel states in his book:

Korea in 1950 was quite different from the country entered by the Allies late in 1945. Two political entities with widely divergent forms of government existed on one small peninsula separated by an artificial boundary. Each government existed only through the support of opposing major powers. Indigenous industrial and economic development remained impossible for either of the two portions of Korea. Political unity seemed out of the question, and bitter hatreds had developed between them.²⁴

²³Ibid., p. 358.

²⁴Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. II-50.

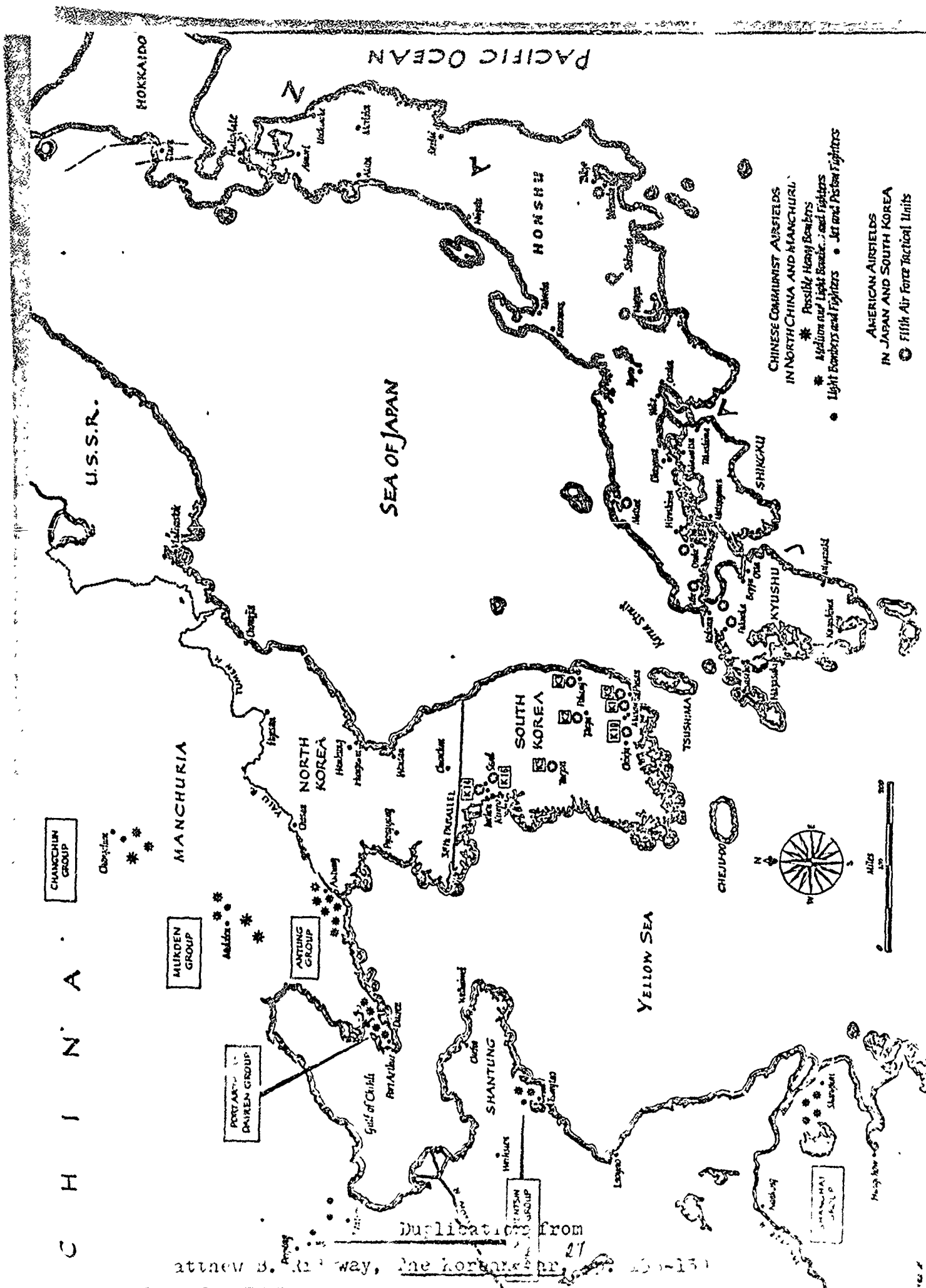
The Republic of Korea Army was fairly large but was poorly equipped and led. In June 1950 the Republic of Korea Army strength was approximately 95,000 men. They were organized into eight infantry divisions (of which only four were at their full 10,000 men strength) and a cavalry regiment. They were very weak in artillery and armor, only possessing 91 105-mm howitzers, two dozen armored cars and about a dozen half-trucks. Their air support was even less impressive in that they had no high performance aircraft and only a few liaison planes and trainers.²⁵

In contrast, by June 1950 the North Korean military forces were ready, and the civilian populace psychologically prepared, for war. The North Korean Army moved into positions along the 38th parallel. Contemporary estimates of the strength of the North Korean Army in June 1950:

. . . gave the North Korean Army 135,000 men organized into 8 infantry divisions, 1 armored brigade, 2 half-strength divisions, 1 separate infantry regiment, and 1 motorcycle reconnaissance regiment In addition to large amounts of artillery, the North Koreans possessed 150 T-34 Russian-made tanks and 180 high-performance combat aircraft.²⁶

²⁵Ibid., n. II-54.

²⁶Ibid., pp. II-51, II-52.



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CHAPTER IV

NORTH KOREA ATTACKS

At four o'clock in the morning of 25 June 1950 (two o'clock in afternoon of 24 June 1950, in Washington, D.C.) the North Korean Army attacked South Korea. Due to an almost complete intelligence failure by the intelligence communities of the United States and South Korean Governments the Communists gained complete tactical surprise. Even if available intelligence had been correctly interpreted to forecast the attack, the United States could have done little about it. The only U.S. plan in effect was to evacuate U.S. nationals from Korea.¹

General MacArthur's headquarters was informed of the invasion about six and one-half hours after it began. He immediately informed Washington and, as succeeding reports from Korea reflected the gravity of the situation, further warned Washington of the seriousness of the attack. In response to a request from Ambassador Muccio, General MacArthur authorized immediate shipment of ammunition from U.S. stores in Japan to Korea. He also ordered U.S. sea and air

¹James F. Schnabel, Policy and Direction: The First Year, U.S. Army in the Korean War (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, forthcoming), pp. IV-1 to IV-14.

protection for the movement and informed Washington of his actions.²

Now it was Washington's turn to take action. Over a period of five days the Administration gradually committed the United States to a war in Korea. Late on the 24th, Secretary of State Acheson, with the approval of President Truman, requested that the U.N. Security Council convene at once in order to consider the events in Korea. The following day the Security Council convened, discussed the events in Korea, and adopted a resolution calling for the immediate cessation of hostilities and a restoration of the 38th parallel boundary. (It should be noted that the U.S.S.R. representative had been boycotting the Security Council since January 1950 over the United Nation's refusal to replace the Chinese Nationalist representative with a Chinese Communist, and was absent during the meeting.) Upon President Truman's return to Washington from Independence, Missouri on Sunday evening the 25th, he called a meeting of his advisors. During this meeting the President and his advisors discussed the situation in Korea and the various courses of action available to them. It was the general consensus of the group that the line must be drawn somewhere and that this was the time and place. The likelihood of Russia pushing the crisis to general war was discussed in detail and the group's

²Ibid., pp. IV-14 to IV-16.

consensus was that the military balance was more favorable to the United States in the long run and that Russia would probably not resort to general war. At the end of the meeting the President directed that the following actions be taken: (1) that General MacArthur be authorized and directed to supply Korea with arms and equipment; (2) that the U.S. Air Force be ordered to protect Kimpo airport during the evacuation of U.S. personnel; and (3) that the Seventh Fleet be ordered to the Formosa Straits (the decision being reserved by the President as to what orders would be issued to the Fleet upon their arrival). In addition, MacArthur was directed to send a group of officers as observers to Korea.³

On the 26th the reports from Korea worsened. General MacArthur's latest dispatches forecasted an early fall of Seoul and the President had received a personal appeal for help from Syngman Rhee. Another meeting of his advisors was called by the President for 2100 hours that evening to discuss the Korean crisis. It was recommended by Secretary Acheson that American air and naval forces be permitted to support the Republic of Korea forces. He also proposed that the Seventh Fleet be directed to prevent the attack of Formosa by the Communist Chinese and likewise any attack of the mainland by the Nationalist Chinese. The President approved both

³Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, Vol. II, Years of Trial and Hope (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1956), pp. 331-36; see also Acheson, Present at the Creation, pp. 404-07; and Schnabel, Policy and Decision, pp. IV-18 to IV-26.

measures and the JCS forwarded the necessary instructions on to General MacArthur. The JCS specified to him that the air and naval operations were only authorized below the 38th parallel.⁴

On the 27th the United States again denounced the North Korean action to the U.N. Security Council and demanded stronger measures be taken than the June 25th proclamation had specified. The U.N. Security Council (with the U.S.S.R. delegate still missing) determined that the North Korean attack was a breach of peace and having noted that the North Korean forces had not withdrawn back to the 38th parallel nor ceased hostilities as requested, recommended "that the Members of the United Nations furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area."⁵ This resolution confirmed instructions already issued by the United States on the 26th. The President followed the U.N. proclamation with a public statement to the American people outlining his actions concerning the use of air and sea forces to support the Korean Government and the purpose of the Seventh Fleet in Formosan waters.⁶ Prior to

⁴Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. IV-34.

⁵U.S., The Department of State, Guide to the U.N. in Korea, Department of the State Publication No. 4299 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951), p. 13.

⁶For the complete text of the statement see Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 338-39.

the releasing of the statement President Truman and his advisors briefed a group of senior Congressional leaders of both parties on the developments in Korea and on the statement the President was about to release.⁷ Upon the arrival of General MacArthur's survey team in Korea on 27 June, in accordance with JCS instructions, control of all U.S. military forces passed to General MacArthur.

On the 28th, Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio pointed out in a speech to the Senate that he believed the Administration was responsible for the trouble in Korea. He specifically pointed out that the division of Korea; the failure to arm the South sufficiently; the loss of mainland China to the Communists; and Secretary Acheson's speech on 12 January 1950 had all made the attack inevitable. Senator Taft also commented that, while he approved of the actions that President Truman had taken in Korea since the invasion, the President had gone about it in the wrong way and should have requested a Congressional resolution authorizing the intervention. In his book, Secretary Acheson said about Taft's speech, "His speech was typical - bitterly partisan and ungracious, but basically honest."⁸ During the meeting of the National Security Council that afternoon the subject

⁷Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1969), p. 409.

⁸Ibid., pp. 220-284.

of Russian intervention and intentions were again discussed. (The National Security Council had never doubted that the Russians were behind the attack.) The reaction and support of the other NATO countries was also discussed by Mr. Averell Harriman, who had just returned from Paris, reporting that there had been a general feeling of relief when the United States had announced it would meet the challenge in Korea. He further stated that the Europeans were fully aware of the implications of the President's decision.⁹ Secretary Acheson however, pointed out to the President, " . . . that we could not count on the continuance of the enthusiastic support that our staunch attitude in Korea had evoked in the country and in the world. Firm leadership would be less popular if it should involve casualties and Taxes."¹⁰ He went on to stress that what had been done in the last three days might ultimately involve us in all-out war. The President replied, ". . . that the danger involved was obvious but that we should not back out of Korea unless a military situation elsewhere demanded such action."¹¹

⁹Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 340-41.

¹⁰Acheson, Present at the Creation, p. 411.

¹¹Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 340. It is interesting to note that at the same meeting the following, concerning personal contact with MacArthur, was discussed: "The Secretary of the Air Force, Thomas Finletter, brought up the question of mutual understanding between Washington and the Far East Command in Tokyo. He felt that personal contact might help us avoid mistakes and suggested that General Vandenberg be sent over to inform General MacArthur more specifically on the thinking in Washington."

On the 29th another meeting of the President's advisors was called for 1700. The chief of the survey team which General MacArthur had sent to Korea had reported that the situation was grave and that the status quo could not be restored without commitment of U.S. troops. The Secretary of Defense brought up a proposed directive to be sent to General MacArthur in which the last paragraph could give the impression that the United States was planning to go to war with Russia, but the President very emphatically said he wanted no messages sent that had that implication in it. He wanted all actions to be taken to repulse the North Korean attack back to the 38th parallel, but the President stated that he, ". . . wanted to be sure that we would not become so deeply committed in Korea that we could not take care of such other situations as might develop."¹² His military advisors requested that they be authorized to conduct air and naval operations north of the 38th parallel and the President agreed, pointing out that the attacks in North Korea should be restricted to military targets. In his Memoirs, President

"It was my opinion, however, that at the present moment the Chiefs of Staff were most urgently needed in Washington. Nevertheless, I understood the need for mutual understanding between Washington and Tokyo and expressed my regret that General MacArthur had so consistently declined all invitations to return to the United States for even a short visit. There had been no opportunity for him to meet me as Commander in Chief. I felt that if the Korean conflict was prolonged I would want to see General MacArthur."

¹²Ibid., p. 341.

Truman stated that he, ". . . wanted it clearly understood that our operations in Korea were designed to restore peace there and to restore the border."¹³ As a result of this decision the JCS sent directions to General MacArthur that he could send his planes into North Korea to bomb "purely military" targets and that he was to keep his planes well away from the Manchurian and Soviet Union frontiers. He was also given operational control of the Seventh Fleet to neutralize Formosa and was authorized to permit his naval vessels to engage targets in the North under the same restrictions as the Air Force.¹⁴

General MacArthur, upon his return from the inspection trip to Korea cabled Washington with a very gloomy

¹³Ibid., p. 341.

¹⁴Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. IV-42. It should be noted that at this time General MacArthur was on an inspection trip to Korea. LTC Schnabel points out that there is considerable evidence that General MacArthur had not waited for JCS permission to conduct operations in North Korea. Interviews with MacArthur's pilot, and a published report from one of the newspapermen on the inspection flight with MacArthur, a full 24 hours prior to the JCS directive, corroborate that General MacArthur directed his air force to take out the North Korean airfields immediately. Major General Courtney Whitney (General MacArthur's aide) stated in his book on MacArthur, that MacArthur reasoned that this authority was implied in the discretion normal to a field commander. Whitney went on to state, "Here was no timid delay while authorization was obtained from Washington; here was the capacity for command decision and the readiness to assume responsibility which had always been MacArthur's forte. See Courtney Whitney, MacArthur: His Rendezvous with History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1956), p. 326.

impression of his visit to Korea portraying what had happened and the complete inability of the South Korean Army to conduct any effective counter-action. He said that the only assurance of holding South Korea was through the introduction of U.S. ground combat forces into the Korean battle area. In his report General MacArthur requested permission:

. . . to immediately move a United States Regimental Combat Team to the reinforcement of the vital area discussed and to provide for a possible build-up to a two-division strength from the troops in Japan for an early counter-offensive.¹⁵

Approval was immediately granted by the President early on the morning of the 30th to dispatch the RCT to the battle area. A meeting of the President and his advisors was called for 0830 that same morning. During this meeting the President approved the commitment of the two divisions from Japan. The group also discussed an offer, tendered the day before, from Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek to provide thirty-three thousand troops for use in Korea, if they were transported and supplied by the United States. The President was initially in favor of accepting the offer but the State Department objected because it might result in bringing Chinese Communist intervention into Korea and/or Formosa; and the Defense Department objected saying the transport could be better used for our own troops and supplies and that Chiang's troops were not likely to be effective against the North

¹⁵Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. IV-46.

Korean armor. President Truman agreed to their recommendations and turned down the Chinese offer. Upon hearing about the decision General MacArthur suggested he go to Formosa to explain it to the Generalissimo but instead a State Department officer was sent from Tokyo to Formosa with the explanation.¹⁶

The Joint Chiefs of Staff were not in favor of the use of American ground forces in Korea because of the personnel, training, and logistic situation of the Army in June of 1950. Because of budget and personnel cuts the Army was in poor shape to fight even a limited war. The Joint Chiefs of Staff was concerned that the movement of U.S. occupation troops from Japan to Korea would so reduce the U.S. Garrison in Japan that it would not be effective in the event of a Soviet attack on Japan. Also they were quite concerned with the small size of the strategic reserve in the United States and its capability to replace the units in Japan, provide any more troops to Korea, and fulfill other worldwide commitments.¹⁷ Even though the military establishment did not favor the use of American ground forces in Korea they made no objections to the President, except pointing out the problems and the difficulties which would result, on the decision to commit ground forces.

¹⁶ Acheson. Present at the Creation, pp. 412-13; see also Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 343.

¹⁷ Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. IV-41 & IV-48. For an excellent analysis of the status of National Defense and the United States Army in June 1950 see Chapter III of LAC Schnabel's book.

Thus, on 30 June 1950 the United States was fully committed in Korea. The President's decision to act under his constitutional authority as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and under the general powers of the President to conduct foreign relations of the United States rather than request Congressional approval would continue to be debated throughout the conflict in Korea and received considerable attention during the Senate hearings on the relief of General MacArthur.

General MacArthur was to comment on the United States entry into the Korean War in his Reminiscences as follows:

Thus, step by hesitant step, the United States went to war against Communism in Asia. I could not help being amazed at the manner in which this great decision was made. With no submission to Congress, whose duty it is to declare war, and without even consulting the field commander involved, the members of the executive branch of the government agreed to enter the Korean War. All the risks inherent in this decision - including the possibility of Chinese and Russian involvement - applied then just as much as they applied later.¹⁸

¹⁸ MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 331.

CHAPTER V

DIRECTION, BUILDUP AND DEFENSE

POLICY DIRECTION TO GENERAL MAC ARTHUR

In June of 1950 the chain of command from the President to General MacArthur went through the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). At the outbreak of the Korean War the Secretary of Defense was Mr. Louis A. Johnson. (He was to be succeeded by General of the Army George C. Marshall in September.) The Secretary of Defense exercised his control of the unified commands through the JCS, which at this time consisted of: Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Omar N. Bradley; Chief of Staff of the Army, General J. Lawton Collins; Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Forrest Sherman; and Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Hoyt S. Vandenberg. The Secretary of Defense had a policy of designating one of the service Chiefs of Staff as Executive Agent for the JCS for each potential theater of operations around the world. The Executive Agent for the JCS for military operations in the Far East (which included Korea) was General Collins. Accordingly, all JCS actions, policies, and directives to General MacArthur were channeled through General Collins. While the JCS exercised operational

control of the theater, the administrative and logistic support of the theater of operations was through the civilian service Secretaries. At this time the three service Secretaries were: Secretary of the Army, Mr. Frank Pace, Jr.; Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Francis Matthews; and Secretary of the Air Force, Mr. Thomas Finletter.¹

POLICY FORMULATION

Formulation of foreign policy was, and still is, the prerogative of the President. To advise him in matters of national security the President had the National Security Council (NSC). In June 1950 the constitutional composition of the NSC included the President, the Vice-President, the Secretaries of State and Defense, and the Chairman of the National Security Resources Board (NSRB). In addition the President had the statutory authority to add other heads of executive departments as he deemed necessary. President Truman used the NSC strictly as a place for recommendations to be worked out, never to decide policy. He stated in his *Memoirs*:

. . . Even when the President sits as chairman in a meeting of the National Security Council and indicates agreement, nothing is final until the Council formally submits a document to the President. The document states that the Council met and recommended such-and-such an action, "which met with your approval." When the

¹J. Lawton Collins, War in Peacetime (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1969), pp. 6, 7, and 13; see also Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 362.

President signs this document, the recommendation then becomes a part of the policy of the government.²

The other principal group available to the President for advice on national security was the JCS. The Joint Chiefs of Staff were designated, by law, as the principal military advisors to the President, the NSC, and the Secretary of Defense. The JCS answered only to the authority of the President and the Secretary of Defense.³

THE FAR EAST COMMAND

In addition to being the Commander in Chief, Far East Command (in theory a unified command) General MacArthur was also designated as Supreme Commander, Allied Powers (SCAP), and Commanding General, United States Army Forces, Far East (USAFFE). In reality the top headquarters within the Far East Command (called General Headquarters) was essentially an Army Headquarters, staffed almost entirely by Army personnel. The USAFFE existed in name only and all its functions were handled by General Headquarters (GHQ). This caused some resentment on the part of the commanders of Far East Air

²Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, Vol. II, Years of Trial and Hope (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1956), pp. 59-60.

³James F. Schnabel, Policy and Direction: The First Year, U.S. Army in the Korean War (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, forthcoming), p. III-6. It should be noted that the service Secretaries had no direct control over their respective Chiefs of Staff when the Chiefs of Staff were acting as members of the JCS.

Force (FEAF) and Naval Forces, Far East (NavFE) in that their was no coequal Army headquarters (USAFCE) to them. This had the effect of placing the subordinate Army commands on the same level with FEAF and NavFE. The commanders of the FEAF and NavFE were Lieutenant General George E. Stratemeyer and Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, respectively.

The major subordinate Army commands were Eighth Army, the GHQ Headquarters and Service Group, the Ryukyus Command and the Marianas-Bonins Command. The command that ultimately assumed control in Korea was the Eighth Army commanded by Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker.⁴

In June 1950 the Eighth Army consisted of four understrength infantry divisions; the 1st Cavalry Division; the 7th Infantry Division; the 24th Infantry Division; and the 25th Infantry Division. Eighth Army was at 93 percent of its authorized strength but it should be noted that this authorized strength was only approximately two-thirds of wartime strength in that one infantry battalion was deleted from each regiment, one artillery battery from each battalion, and similar reductions in other areas.⁵

THE BUILDUP

Upon receiving approval from the President to employ U.S. forces in Korea, General MacArthur immediately ordered

⁴Ibid., pp. III-15 to III-20.

⁵Ibid., p. III-34. See also Collins, War in Peacetime, p. 67.

the 24th Infantry Division to deploy to Korea. A battalion task force from the division was flown in ahead of the main body of the division with orders to engage the North Korean Army as soon as possible. General MacArthur gave his reason for this as:

. . . I threw in troops by air in the hope of establishing a locus of resistance around which I could rally the fast retreating South Korean forces. I had hoped by that arrogant display of strength to fool the enemy into a belief that I had greater resources at my disposal than I did⁶

The battalion task force landed in Pusan on 1 and 2 July and were sent north to engage the enemy upon sight. By 5 July the first U.S. ground combat unit was engaged in combat with the North Korean Army.

Meanwhile the 24th Division Commander had arrived in Korea and had assumed command of United States Armed Forces in Korea (ASAFIK). As his division arrived in country (most elements were there by 5 July) he committed them piecemeal into action in an effort to stop the North Korean advance. As was the case with the battalion task force, the division was not strong enough to stop the numerically stronger and better equipped enemy. The division was, however, able to slow the enemy, but at a great cost in men and equipment. On 5 July MacArthur ordered the 25th Division from Japan to Korea and this division also was committed piecemeal as it arrived in the combat zone. With the arrival of the second

⁶MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 336.

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⁶MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 336.

division in Korea, General MacArthur directed General Walker to take command in Korea. On 12 July the USAFIK headquarters was dissolved and Eighth Army assumed control in Korea.⁷

It was now evident to General MacArthur that he had underestimated the force required to stop the North Koreans. On 7 July he reported to the JCS that his forces were up against a superior and well led force. He revised his estimate of the U.S. ground forces required in Korea (initially two divisions) to four or five divisions supported by an airborne RCT and an armored group. To reach this strength level he requested that 30,000 men and officers be sent to him from the United States at once. This was in addition to the normal replacements and the replacements for estimated battle losses. The JCS did not question General MacArthur's requirements and sent the replacements and units they had available to the Far East (to include the 2nd Infantry Division and a Marine RCT) but they were unable to fulfill all of his requirements. Assets available were not adequate to send all the forces required by General MacArthur and still fill other worldwide commitments. This was to remain a source of friction between MacArthur and the JCS.⁸

⁷Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. V-1 to V-7, V-13, and V-14. During this same period the 1st Cavalry Division was ordered to prepare for an amphibious landing on the east coast of Korea.

⁸Ibid., Chap. V. For a detailed report on the actions taken by the JCS to build up the forces in Korea, and rebuild the strength in Japan, see Chapters V through VIII of this reference.

In quick sequence actions were taken by Congress, the President, and the Department of Defense to increase the authorized strength of the Army, increase the draft, call reservists to active duty and to activate National Guard units to meet the emergency. The above, while meeting the longer term needs of the Army and General MacArthur, would take too much time to be of any immediate help to the forces in Korea. Thus, although General MacArthur had planned to save the 1st Cavalry Division for a later amphibious operation, he was forced to deploy the division to Korea in mid-July to assist the other two divisions in stopping the North Koreans.

FORMATION OF THE U.N. COMMAND

On 7 July 1950 the U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution which: (1) recommended that members providing forces to Korea under the 25 and 27 June resolutions, make their forces available to a unified command under the United States; (2) requested the United States to designate the commander of the unified force; (3) authorized the unified command to use the U.N. flag in operations against the North Koreans; and (4) requested the United States to provide the Security Council with reports on actions taken.⁹ With the

⁹U.S., The Department of State, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, Department of the State Publication 392, (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1950), pp. 66-67. The Secretary General of the U.N. had proposed that the United States direct all forces in Korea with the help of a U.N. "Committee on Coordination of Assistance for Korea" but the JCS recommended against this proposal because

JCS's recommendation the President appointed General MacArthur as Commander in Chief, United Nations Command (CINCUNC) on 10 July. In additional instructions to General MacArthur on 12 July, the JCS directed him to avoid appearance of unilateral American action and cautioned him that "For worldwide political reasons it is important to emphasize repeatedly the fact that our operations are in support of the U.N. Security Council." They further directed him to identify himself as Commander in Chief, U.N. Command as much as possible and emphasize in his communiques the actions of other member nation's forces.¹⁰ On 24 July General MacArthur officially established the United Nations Command (UNC) headquarters in Japan utilizing, with few exceptions, his GHQ. The formation of the new command did not change the command relationship between the President and General MacArthur. Any instructions from the United Nations went through the Administration before going to General MacArthur and General MacArthur's periodic reports to the United Nations went through the JCS and the executive branch prior to going to the United Nations.

they felt it would raise serious operational difficulties. The JCS strongly recommended a command arrangement in which the United States, in the name of the United Nations, would control the Korean operations without any positive contact between the field commander and the United Nations. Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. VI-2 and VI-3.

¹⁰ Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. VI-5.

VISIT FROM WASHINGTON

On 10 July 1950 President Truman sent General Collins and General Vandenberg to the Far East to visit General MacArthur. The purpose of the visit was to get, firsthand, from MacArthur his requirements for the conduct of the war in Korea. In his initial briefing to the visitors General MacArthur was quick to caution against underestimating the North Koreans. He was, however, more optimistic now than he had been a week earlier as to the prospects of maintaining U.N. forces in Korea. He stated that just how successful he was to be directly related to the support he was to receive. He went on to outline his requirements and "expressed extreme impatience with delay or partial measures." He additionally stated that he understood the American responsibilities around the world, but that he believed winning in Korea was extremely important in slowing down world communism and that his theater should receive the highest priority on troops and equipment. General Collins then asked General MacArthur specific questions concerning when MacArthur could mount a counteroffensive and how many troops would he need for the action, and also how many after the fighting had ceased. General MacArthur could not give a categorical reply but stated he probably could stabilize the situation with the three committed divisions but would require a total of eight divisions in the Far East Command (to include Japan) to

complete the clearance of Korea. Again he emphasized his immediate need for replacements and additional units.¹¹

Prior to returning to Washington, General Collins made a visit to Korea to talk to the commanders and see the situation firsthand. General Walker commented that he was confident he could hold the bridgehead with the troops then on the way from Japan. The 24th Division Commander reported that he was quite concerned about his battle losses. On his return to Japan Collins presented a U.N. Flag to General MacArthur from U.N. Secretary General Trygve Lie. In private talks with General MacArthur prior to his return to Washington, General Collins stated that his personal view was that General MacArthur could count on, for the offensive, the following units in addition to the units he already had in his command: the 2nd Infantry Division; the 1st Marine Division; the 4th and 29th RCT's; and a RCT from the 11th Airborne Division. General MacArthur told Collins he would make his plans on this information but that if Russia or Communist China intervened he would have to revise his plans. MacArthur ended the conversation with a comment that he was aware of the overall problem and understood that the General Reserve could not be reduced any lower at the present time in the face of other commitments.¹²

¹¹Ibid., pp. VI-15 to VI-20. See also Collins, War in Peacetime, pp. 81-85.

¹²Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. VI-20 and VI-21. See also Collins, War in Peacetime, pp. 84-85.

WITHDRAWAL TO THE PUSAN PERIMETER

During the remainder of July and in August General MacArthur's forces gradually withdrew to a defensive perimeter around the city of Pusan. It was an extremely hard fought delaying action which proved successful in buying time for sufficient forces to be brought in to conduct a counter-offensive. General MacArthur's piecemeal commitment of his forces against a superior enemy, although a violation of U.S. military doctrine, proved to be the right course of action and avoided the political effects of a withdrawal from Korea.¹³

MAC ARTHUR VISITS FORMOSA

As mentioned previously one of the first nations to answer the United Nations call for troops to be used in Korea was Nationalist China. On the advice of the State and Defense Departments the President had declined Chiang Kai-shek's offer. In his Memoirs President Truman related that General MacArthur had discussed this offer with General Collins during the 10 July visit to the Far East and that General MacArthur had advised against accepting the offer because: (1) they would be of limited value in Korea; (2) the required logistical support would be a heavy burden; (3) it would hurt the defensive posture of Formosa. General MacArthur also suggested

¹³Ibid., p. VI-30.

that he go to Formosa to explain this to the Generalissimo.¹⁴ Neither General Collins nor LTC Schnabel mention this discussion in their books on this period. General MacArthur in his Reminiscences stated he wanted to visit Formosa because:

The area in which I had military responsibility having been enlarged to include Formosa and the Pescadore Islands, I felt it necessary, late in July, to visit the island in order to determine its military capabilities for defense.¹⁵

On 31 July General MacArthur visited Formosa. The visit caused considerable speculation in the world press and some implied that MacArthur did not support the President's policy of neutralizing Formosa and favored a more aggressive policy with regards to Formosa.¹⁶ In his Reminiscences, General MacArthur commented, "To my astonishment, the visit to Formosa and my meeting with Chiang Kai-shek was greeted by a furor." He went on to say in a public statement that the purpose of his trip was strictly military and had no connection with political affairs.¹⁷ In contrast, Dean Acheson was to charge, as a result of the visit, that General MacArthur ". . . had ordered three squadrons of jet fighters to Formosa without the knowledge of the Pentagon."¹⁸

¹⁴Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 348.

¹⁵MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 339.

¹⁶Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 353-54.

¹⁷MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 340.

¹⁸Acheson, Present at the Creation, p. 422.

On 27 July, just prior to the General's visit to Formosa, the National Security Council had discussed the United States policy towards Formosa. In this meeting the JCS recommended that the United States grant considerable aid to Formosa so as to enable the Chinese Nationalists to protect themselves from any attack from the Chinese mainland. After much discussion the President:

. . . approved three specific proposals: the granting of extensive military aid to Nationalist China; a military survey by MacArthur's headquarters of the requirements of Chiang Kai-shek's forces; and the plan to carry out reconnaissance flights along the China coast to determine the imminence of attacks against Formosa.¹⁹

On 3 August the JCS forwarded the decisions to General MacArthur along with specific instructions emphasizing the limits of U.S. policy regarding Formosa. In addition, the President told MacArthur he was sending W. Averell Harriman (Special Assistant to the President) to Tokyo at once to discuss the Far Eastern political situation with him. In the President's words, "I had asked Harriman to visit MacArthur so that the General might be given a firsthand account of the political planning in Washington" ²⁰ General MacArthur was to state ". . . Averell Harriman was sent to Tokyo to advise the President on political aspects of the Far Eastern situation" ²¹

¹⁹Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 350.

²⁰Ibid. p. 353.

²¹MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 341.

Harriman arrived in Tokyo on 6 August for the talks with General MacArthur. In his report to the President after the meetings, Harriman made, among others, the following observations: (1) that General MacArthur supported fully the decision to defend Korea; (2) that a speed-up of the build-up in Korea was essential; (3) that MacArthur did not believe Russia or Communist China had any current plans of intervening in Korea or becoming involved in a general war; (4) that MacArthur believed, once the conflict was won, that there would be no political problem on uniting Korea utilizing the current constitution; (5) that upon being told that the President did not want Chiang to be the cause of starting a war with the Chinese Communists on the mainland, and the possibility of this dragging the United States into a world war, MacArthur replied that he would, as a soldier, obey any orders from the President; (6) that while MacArthur would accept the President's position and act accordingly, that he (Harriman) had a feeling that General MacArthur was not in full agreement on the Administration's plan for handling Formosa and Chiang; (7) that MacArthur did not agree with the Administration that support of Chiang was a liability with many of our allies; (8) that MacArthur believed our policies were undermining Chiang; (9) that MacArthur did not believe an attack on Formosa would be attempted at the present time, and that if it was attempted, his forces could prevent it; and (10) that MacArthur believed we should fight communists

everywhere and that the United States should provide economic and military aid in the Far East to help resist a communist takeover of the area.²² In the words of Dean Acheson:

Harriman returned with an ambivalent report. On the one hand, he told the President and me that MacArthur, while disagreeing with our China and Formosa policy, had said that he was a good soldier and knew how to obey orders. Yet doubts persisted in Harriman's mind that he and MacArthur had come "to a full agreement on the way we believed things should be handled on Formosa and with the Generalissimo." They certainly had not.²³

General MacArthur's view of the visit, as published in his Reminiscences, was quite different:

. . . We discussed fully global conditions. I found him careful and cautious in what he said, but gained these very definite impressions: that there was no fixed and comprehensive United States policy for the Far East; that foreign influences, especially those of Great Britain, were very powerful in Washington; that there was no apparent interest in mounting an offensive against the Communists; that we were content to attempt to block their moves, but not to initiate any counter-moves; that we would defend Formosa if attacked, just as we had done in Korea; that President Truman had conceived a violent animosity toward Chiang Kai-shek; and that anyone who favored the Generalissimo might well arouse the President's disfavor. He left me with a feeling of concern and uneasiness that the situation in the Far East was little understood and mistakenly downgraded in high circles in Washington.²⁴

After getting Harriman's report the President stated to the press that he and MacArthur saw "eye to eye on Formosa policy."²⁵ To make sure he caused the JCS to send MacArthur, on 14 August, instructions that the intent of the directive

²²Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 349-53.

²³Acheson, Present at the Creation, pp. 422-23.

²⁴MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 341.

²⁵Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 354.

to him to defend Formosa:

. . . was to limit United States action there to such support operations as would be practicable without committing any forces to the island itself. No commitments were to be made to the National Government for the basing of fighter squadrons on Formosa, and no United States forces of any kind were to be based ashore on Formosa except with the specific approval of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.²⁶

THE VFW LETTER²⁷

The President assumed Harriman's visit, and the JCS message to MacArthur, would prevent further public disagreement over Formosan policy between him and MacArthur. The U.S.S.R. had brought the Formosa subject up in the United Nations by charging the United States with aggression in its policy of neutralization of Formosa. They claimed that the United States action essentially incorporated Formosa within the American orbit. In answer, on 25 August, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Warren R. Austin, wrote a letter to Trygve Lie (U.N. Secretary General) stating that the United States had only one intention with its policy concerning Formosa, that of reducing the area of conflict in the Far East. The United States also made it be known to the United Nations that it was willing to have the United Nations investigate the Formosa situation.

²⁶Ibid., p. 354.

²⁷Unless otherwise indicated, the references for this section are Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 354-58 and Acheson, Present at The Creation, pp. 423-24.

On the evening of the same day that Austin's letter was delivered to the United Nations, the Associated Press carried a ticker report of a message General MacArthur had written for delivery at the annual convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The message was not to have been published for another few days but it had been released to a number of newspapers and had been printed in the U.S. News and World Report which was already in the mails. In the message MacArthur, after taking a few paragraphs to thank the VFW for their confidence and support and to state that their successors in Korea were doing an outstanding job, took the opportunity to state his views ". . . concerning the relationship of Formosa to our strategic potential in the Pacific. . . ." He then went into detail as to his appraisal of the strategic importance of Formosa and the consequences of Formosa being dominated by a potential enemy. He continued:

Nothing could be more fallacious than the threadbare argument by those who advocate appeasement and defeatism in the Pacific that if we defend Formosa we alienate continental Asia.

Those who speak thus do not understand the Orient. They do not grant that it is in the pattern of the Orient psychology to respect and follow aggressive, resolute and dynamic leadership - to quickly turn on a leadership characterized by timidity or vacillation - and they underestimate the Oriental mentality²⁸

The message ended with the following passage:

The decision of President Truman on June 27 lighted into flame a lamp of hope throughout Asia that was burning dimly toward extinction. It marked for the Far East

²⁸ Allen Guttman (ed.), Korea and the Theory of Limited War (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1967), p. 6.

the focal and turning point in this area's struggle for freedom. It swept aside in one great monumental stroke all of the hypocrisy and the sophistry which has confused and deluded so many people distant from the actual scene.²⁹

Notwithstanding the apparent praise of the President in the last paragraph of the message, the Administration was extremely unhappy with both the method in which the message had been released, and the statements contained therein. The message had been written in response to a request sent directly to General MacArthur from the commander-in-chief of the VFW for a message to be read at their 28 August national encampment. In the words of General MacArthur:

. . . I had sent messages to many other organizations in the past and regarded it as a matter of routine. The message expressed my personal opinion of the strategic importance of Formosa and its relation to our defensive position in the Pacific. There was nothing political in it. I sent it through the Department of Army ten days before the encampment. The officials of that Department apparently found nothing objectionable in it. It was in complete support of the President's announced policy toward Formosa³⁰

The Administration did, in fact, find the message objectionable and had not seen the message prior to its publication. In a copyrighted story in the Washington Star on 31 August, Doris Fleeson wrote the following concerning the delivery of the MacArthur statement:

Word that the Defense Department had distributed the MacArthur statement to the VFW practically panicked the Pentagon until research by General Eugene L. Harrison, Deputy Chief of Information for the Army, disclosed the whole story.

No official saw the statement.

²⁹Ibid., p. 6.

³⁰MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 341.

August 20, Tokyo sent it directly to Chicago to 5th Army Headquarters there, addressed to Clyde A. Lewis, VFW Commander. Fifth Army reported back that Mr. Lewis did not seem to be in Chicago yet.

August 21, Tokyo re-sent the statement in the form of a service message to the Pentagon signal center, still addressed to Mr. Lewis personally. The signal center sent it, exactly as Western Union would a personal telegram, over to the VFW national headquarters here for delivery to Mr. Lewis. In the meantime it is understood that 5th Army also had reached him by telephone and told him the message had arrived.

Service messages, General Harrison explained, are Government handled but privately delivered only to the persons to whom they are addressed. It would not, he said, occur to the signal center to call anyone's attention to a message plainly directed to a private person and, in fact, they did not but handled it routinely.

The message was sent to only one addressee - Mr. Lewis. He was happily surprised to get it. The VFW wanted a message from some world figure to their national convention³¹

Secretary Acheson, upon learning of the message from the AP ticker tape, stated that he was ". . . outraged at the effrontery and damaging effect at home and abroad of MacArthur's message" President Truman said:

. . . the whole tenor of the message was critical of the very policy which he had so recently told Harriman he would support. There was no doubt in my mind that the world would read it that way and that it must have been intended that way.

It was my opinion that this statement could only serve to confuse the world as to just what our Formosa policy was, for it was at odds with my announcement of June 27, and it also contradicted what I had told the Congress. Furthermore, our policy had been reaffirmed

³¹Doris Fleeson, "More Important Abroad: Truman's Challenge to MacArthur Blocked Undermining from Within, "Washington Star, August 31, 1950, General Douglas MacArthur File: Dismissal - Foreign and Domestic Clippings of the Democratic National Committee Library Clipping File (Box #88), Truman Library.

on the day before in a letter which, on my instructions, Ambassador Austin had addressed to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Trygve Lie.³²

The President held a meeting with his advisors (including the Secretaries of State and Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff) on the 26th. He asked all present if they had any prior intimation or knowledge of the message. All replied they had not known of the message and were surprised and shocked at the message. The President stated in his Memoirs that he considered, at that time, relieving General MacArthur of all, or part, of his command in the Far East but decided against such a step. He did, however, instruct that General MacArthur formally withdraw his statement. Secretary of Defense Johnson sent the following message to MacArthur:

The President of the United States directs that you withdraw your message for National Encampment of Veterans of Foreign Wars, because various features with respect to Formosa are in conflict with the policy of the United States and its position in the United Nations.³³

The President followed Johnson's message with a personal letter to General MacArthur explaining in detail his reasons for ordering the withdrawal of the message and included the text of a letter he had written to Ambassador Austin on the seven fundamental points of the Administrations policy towards Formosa.³⁴

³²Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 354-55.

³³Ibid., p. 356.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 356-58.

General MacArthur immediately complied with the President's order and formally withdrew the letter. He stated in reply to the President's order:

My message was most carefully prepared to fully support the President's policy position. My remarks were calculated only to support his declaration and I am unable to see wherein they might be interpreted otherwise. The views were purely my personal ones and the subject had previously been freely discussed in all circles, government and private, both at home and abroad.³⁵

The damage though, had already been done. Even though General MacArthur formally withdrew the statement the message was already in the hands of the press and was widely printed and quoted. Notwithstanding that the ideas in the VFW letter were clearly labeled as the personal views of the General, the position of MacArthur as both the United States and United Nations Commander in the Far East, gave rise to serious doubts in the minds of our allies (especially England) as to who was determining foreign policy in the United States - President Truman or General MacArthur.

³⁵ MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 4.

CHAPTER VI

THE UNITED NATIONS TAKES THE OFFENSIVE

THE INCHON LANDING¹

During General Collin's and General Vandenberg's first visit to Korea in July, General MacArthur had mentioned that as soon as possible he planned to conduct an amphibious operation in the vicinity of Inchon. He continued with this planning and by the end of July proposed to Washington a September landing. The JCS questioned his optimism in view of the current situation in Korea but MacArthur was confident he could succeed if the troops he had been promised in early July would be provided on time. When General MacArthur had to commit the 2d Infantry Division and the 5th Marine RCT (the units he had planned to use for the amphibious operation) to the Pusan defense, his staff did not believe the operation could be supported in September and recommended that it be postponed until mid-October. In spite of these warnings MacArthur was still adamant that the operation must go in

¹Unless otherwise indicated the references for this section are James F. Schnabel, Policy and Direction: The First Year, U.S. Army in the Korean War (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, forthcoming), Chapters VIII through X and J. Lawton Collins, War in Peacetime (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1969), Chapter VI.

September to be successful in its purpose of relieving pressure on the Pusan perimeter as soon as possible, and to take advantage of the tidal and weather conditions available in September but not likely to be available in October.

By the middle of August MacArthur had tentatively selected the naval and ground forces to conduct the Inchon landing. He was still planning on a 15 September amphibious assault supported by an Eighth Army break out of its perimeter and link up with the amphibious force. MacArthur now began to meet renewed objections to the landing at Inchon by persons both within and without his staff. The Navy and Marine planners felt, though not opposing the landing, that the Army planners were underestimating the technical problems the Navy and the Marine Corps would have to overcome in the operation. The Navy and the Marines were concerned about the reliance on the high tides, the vast mud-flats, the high seawalls around the harbor, and the built-up city fighting required in an Inchon landing. All in all, they believed Inchon was a poor place to land.

The JCS also became more worried about the landing during this period because General MacArthur was not keeping them well informed on the development of his plans for the amphibious assault. In order to find out what was taking place the JCS sent General Collins and Admiral Sherman to Tokyo on 19 August to talk to General MacArthur and to find out exactly what his plans were. On their arrival General MacArthur gave them a private briefing on the general status

of the entire Korean operation and then staged a full scale briefing on the planned Inchon operation for them. The Navy started the briefing with a pessimistic assessment of the problems involved in the operation, ending up with a comment that the landing was possible but that they did not recommend it. MacArthur then gave his personal views on the operation stressing the reasons why the operation should be conducted at Inchon, the conditions favoring its success, and the tremendous political and psychological advantages to be gained with its success. When General Collins and Admiral Sherman suggested an alternate landing site at Kunsan (100 miles south of Inchon) MacArthur replied that this alternative did not offer a deep enough envelopment and would not be a decisive operation. To MacArthur, the only landing site that could achieve the success he envisioned was Inchon. General MacArthur did not ask for approval of his plan but rather informed the visitors of the details. The Navy and Marines were still not convinced by MacArthur's enthusiasm and on 24 August made one more try to dissuade him, but to no avail, and from that point forward they put full effort into achieving success at Inchon.

Upon their return to Washington, General Collins and Admiral Sherman briefed the remainder of the JCS on the Inchon plans. The JCS examined the plans in detail, and finding no real disagreement with them, they sent formal approval of the operation to MacArthur on 28 August. Along with this approval they directed MacArthur to keep them

better informed as to his intentions for future offensive operations. Collins and Sherman also briefed the President on their visit and informed him that the JCS had approved the plans.

On 30 August General MacArthur issued his operations order for the Inchon landing, naming the newly established X U.S. Corps to control the operation once the landing was completed. General MacArthur planned that the X Corps would operate directly under his control until further notice rather than under Eighth Army control. When, by the 5th of September, the JCS had not received a copy of the operations order they radioed MacArthur again reminding him of their instructions to keep them informed as to changes and modifications to his plans. The only response from MacArthur was a terse message that the general outline of the plan remained as described to them in August and that he would send an officer courier by 11 September with a detailed description of the planned operation. The JCS did not feel that this gave them the timely information they required. They were still concerned about the possibility of a failure of the Inchon operation and the possible effects of such a failure. They sent another message to MacArthur on 7 September voicing their concern and pointing out to him that he had committed almost all of the Eighth Army's reserve to the landing and that they had no more reinforcements they could send to him for about four months. They then specifically asked MacArthur for a new estimate and a reconsideration of the Inchon landing.

The above message resulted in a forceful protest from General MacArthur about making any changes to the plans at this late date. He voiced his complete confidence in the operation and stated that preparations were proceeding as scheduled. In his Reminiscences MacArthur was to complain bitterly about "this last-minute hesitancy" on the part of the Administration and went on to note:

After dispatching my reply, I waited with growing concern and answer. Was it possible, I asked myself, that even now, when it was all but impossible to bring this great movement grinding to a halt, timidity in an office thousands of miles away, even if by a President himself, could stop this golden opportunity to turn defeat into victory? . . .²

The JCS accepted General MacArthur's views and approved the plan. In addition they obtained President Truman's approval, and on 8 September radioed MacArthur, "We approve your plan and the President has been so informed."³ General MacArthur was not happy with this "short cryptic message." He commented, "I interpreted this to mean that it had been the President who had threatened to interfere and overrule, on a professional military problem, his military advisors."⁴

²MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 352.

³Collins, War in Peacetime, p. 128.

⁴MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 352. General Collins was to note in his book, War in Peacetime, that this charge was not true, that he had "no recollection of President Truman's ever expressing any doubt about the success of Inchon or of his seeking to override any action or decision of the JCS in regard to that operation." Collins, War in Peacetime, p. 129.

Events proved that General MacArthur's optimism was well founded. After the problems of securing acceptance of the plan, and of obtaining the forces necessary to conduct the Inchon landing, the accolades received by General MacArthur must have seemed sweet to his ears. The success of the operation must be credited to General MacArthur; his optimism, self-confidence and strong personality assisted greatly. The message sent to MacArthur by President Truman after the recapture of Seoul reflected the views of the free world:

I know I speak for the entire American people when I send you my warmest congratulations on the victory which has been achieved under your leadership in Korea. Few operations in military history can match either the delaying action where you traded space for time in which to build up your forces, or the brilliant maneuver, which has now resulted in the liberation of Seoul. I am particularly impressed by the splendid cooperation of our Army, Navy and Air Force, and I wish you would extend my thanks and congratulations to the commanders of those services - Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker, Vice Admiral Charles T. Joy and Lieutenant General George A. Stratemeyer. The unification of our arms established by you and by them has set a shining example. My thanks and the thanks of the people of all the free nations go out to your gallant forces - soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen - from the United States and the other countries fighting for freedom under the United Nations banner. I salute you all, and say to all of you from all of us at home, "Well and nobly done."⁵

⁵Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, Vol. II, Years of Trial and Hope (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1956), p. 360. It is interesting to note that General MacArthur printed the text of many of the congratulatory messages received on the success of the Inchon landing in his Reminiscences, pointing out that they were "particularly interesting because of what was soon to take place." Characteristically, MacArthur had omitted (and made no indications of the omission) any reference to the subordinate commanders specified in the President's message. MacArthur, Reminiscences, pp. 356-57.

CROSSING THE 38TH PARALLEL

Prior to the time of the Inchon landing the Administration had no definite policy as to conducting ground operations north of the 38th parallel. In July the President had directed the National Security Council to conduct a study on this problem and make recommendations to him. Concurrently the JCS initiated a study on the same question. During his visit to Japan in August General Collins had discussed this question with General MacArthur and they had agreed that MacArthur should be authorized to continue the attack into North Korea to destroy the North Korean forces. No action, however, could be taken until the NSC finished their study and the President had made his decision.

On 1 September the NSC completed its study and forwarded it to the Departments of State and Defense for comment. In the words of General Collins, "The study was a long somewhat rambling paper, whose central idea was that conditions were too uncertain for the United States to commit itself to any definite course of action."⁶ Though the NSC believed the resolutions of the U.N. Security Council provided a sound legal basis for crossing the parallel they recommended that General MacArthur not be permitted to cross the 38th parallel without United Nations support. The NSC staff was convinced that any crossing of the parallel would result in reactions

⁶Collins, war in Peacetime, p. 144.

from China or Russia, and were equally convinced that the United States did not want its resources tied up in Korea if general war came. They concluded that crossing the parallel was not necessary for victory. Neither the JCS nor General MacArthur agreed with the findings of the study. The JCS argued that stopping at the 38th parallel would not solve the problem but will still leave Korea divided by an artificial boundary. They believed that General MacArthur's mission required that he destroy the North Korean forces and that he should not be hampered in accomplishing this mission by not being allowed to cross the 38th parallel. The JCS objections and thoughts were incorporated into the final NSC report prior to its submission to the President for approval. On 11 September the President approved a policy statement on crossing the parallel. He commented:

The National Security Council recommended that our course of action would be influenced by three factors: actions by the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communists, consultation with friendly members of the United Nations, and the risk of general war.

General MacArthur was to conduct the necessary military operations either to force the North Koreans behind the 38th parallel or to destroy their forces. If there was no indication or threat of entry of Soviet or Chinese Communist elements in force, the National Security Council recommended that General MacArthur was to extend his operations north of the parallel and to make plans for the occupation of North Korea. However, no ground operations were to take place north of the 38th parallel in the event of Soviet or Chinese Communist entry.⁷

⁷Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 359.

In order to give General MacArthur advance information on the decision the JCS sent him the conclusions of the new policy on operations north of the 38th parallel and actions to be taken if Russia or Communist China intervened.⁸ An actual directive, however, was not sent until the 27th of September. This directive was prefaced with a warning that it was not final and would require modification in accordance with future developments and specifically charged MacArthur with reporting any indications that the Soviets or the Communist Chinese were going to intervene. The directive included the following:

Your military objective is the destruction of the North Korean Armed Forces. In attaining this objective you are authorized to conduct military operations, including amphibious and airborne landings or ground operations north of the 38th parallel in Korea, provided that at the time of such operations there has been no entry into North Korea by major Soviet or Chinese Communist Forces, no announcement of intended entry, nor a threat to counter our operations militarily in North Korea. Under no circumstances, however, will your forces cross the Manchurian or U.S.S.R. borders of Korea and, as a matter of policy, no non-Korean Ground Forces will be used in the northeast provinces bordering the Soviet Union or in the area along the Manchurian border. Furthermore, support of your operations north or south of the 38th parallel will not include Air or Naval action against Manchuria or against U.S.S.R. territory.

In the event of the open or covert employment of major Soviet units south of the 38th parallel, you will assume the defense, make no move to aggravate the situation and report to Washington. You should take the same action in the event your forces are operating north of the 38th parallel, and major Soviet units are openly employed. You will not discontinue Air and Naval operations north of the 38th parallel merely because the presence of Soviet or Chinese Communist troops is

⁸ Schnabe, Policy and Direction, p. A-11.

detected in a target area, but if the Soviet Union or Chinese Communists should announce in advance their intention to reoccupy North Korea and give warning, either explicitly or implicitly, that their forces should not be attacked, you should refer the matter immediately to Washington.

In the event of the open or covert employment of major Chinese Communist units south of the 38th parallel, you should continue the action as long as action by your forces offers a reasonable chance of successful resistance. In the event of an attempt to employ small Soviet or Chinese Communist units covertly south of the 38th parallel, you should continue the action.⁹

The directive continued with instructions on the occupation of North Korea and concluded with instructions on restoration of the Government of the Republic of Korea with its capital in Seoul. In part it said:

. . . Although the Government of the Republic of Korea has been generally recognized (except by the Soviet bloc) as the only legal government in Korea, its sovereignty north of the 38th parallel has not been generally recognized. The Republic of Korea and its armed forces should be expected to cooperate in such military operations and military occupation as are conducted by the United Nations forces north of the 38th parallel, but political questions such as the formal extensions of sovereignty over North Korea should await action by the United Nations to complete the unification of the country.¹⁰

In response to the directive General MacArthur sent the following plan back to the JCS for approval:

Briefly, my plan is: (a) Eighth Army as now constituted will attack across the 38th parallel with its main effort on the Pyongyang axis with the objective of seizing Pyongyang; (b) X Corps as now constituted will effect amphibious landing at Wonsan, making juncture with the Eighth Army; (c) 3rd Infantry Division will remain in Japan in GHQ reserve initially; (d) R.O.K. Army forces only will conduct operation north of the line

⁹Ibid., pp. X-14 through X-16.

¹⁰Ibid., p. X-17.

Chungjo-Yongwon-Hungnan; (e) Tentative date for the attack of the Eighth Army will not be earlier than 15 October and not later than 30 October.¹¹

This plan was quickly approved by the JCS and the President and on 30 September MacArthur was given approval by the JCS to carry out his plan. The official approval came none too soon, the leading elements of the 3d Republic of Korea Division crossed into North Korea on 1 October.

THE 7 OCTOBER UNITED STATES RESOLUTION

As stated before, the United States government felt that even though it believed that the 27 June and 7 July Security Council resolutions provided a legal basis for the invasion and occupation of North Korea, a new mandate from the United Nations was preferable to unilateral action by the United States. Unable to work through the Security Council as it had earlier during the war (due to the return of the U.S.S.R. delegate with his veto power in August) the United States caused a resolution to be introduced before the United Nations General Assembly to give additional international legitimacy to their operations in North Korea. On 7 October the General Assembly passed the resolution. As Dean Acheson commented, it in effect revived the U.N plan of 1947 for "a unified, independent and democratic government" for Korea. He went on to say:

¹¹MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 358.

This long-term aim was to be achieved by (1) insuring conditions of stability throughout the country; (2) holding elections under U.N. auspices and taking other constituent acts necessary to establish the government; (3) inviting all sections and representative bodies in the country to cooperate with the United Nations in the effort; (4) maintaining U.N. forces in the country only as long as necessary to achieve these objectives; and (5) providing for the economic rehabilitation of Korea.¹²

REPORTS OF POSSIBLE CHINESE INTERVENTION

As previously noted, the Administration had been quite concerned about the possible intervention of Russia or Communist China since the beginning of the Korean War. Special attention to this possibility had been given by both Washington and MacArthur's headquarters. Considerable indications were present, both political and military, that the Communist Chinese would, if necessary, come to the aid of North Korea. When the landing at Inchon did not bring any actual intervention, only an increase of threatening pronouncements from mainland China and Russia, both Washington and Tokyo seemed to discount the mounting evidence that an intervention was probable.¹³ During the Senate hearings after MacArthur's dismissal, MacArthur was to place the blame for the misinterpretation of the available intelligence on the Administration saying that the intelligence had not been given to him.¹⁴ On

¹²Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1969), p. 454.

¹³Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XI-9 through XI-19.

¹⁴U.S., Congress, Senate, Armed Services Committee and Foreign Services Committee, Military Situation in the

the other hand Schnabel goes to great length in his official history of the Korean War to show that both the intelligence community in Washington, and MacArthur's headquarters, had available the information to indicate intervention and share equally in the failure to correctly evaluate the available intelligence.¹⁵ Even though the Administration may not have thought Chinese intervention was likely, the possibility still existed, and President Truman therefor caused the JCS to give General MacArthur special instructions on what to do if the Chinese Communists did intervene. As a result, on 9 October, the JCS directed MacArthur:

. . . In the event of the open or covert employment anywhere in Korea of major Chinese Communist units, without prior announcement, you should continue the action as long as, in your judgment, action by forces now under your control offers a reasonable chance of success. In any case you will obtain authorization from Washington prior to taking any military action against objectives in Chinese territory.¹⁶

THE WAKE ISLAND CONFERENCE

In early October President Truman decided he would like to meet personally with General MacArthur. In his

Far East, Hearing, 82d Cong., 1st Sess., to conduct an inquiry into the military situation in the Far East and the facts surrounding the relief of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur from his assignments in that area, May 3, 1951 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951), pp. 16-17.

¹⁵Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XI-9 through XI-19.

¹⁶Ibid., p. XI-17.

Memoirs he stated the purpose of the visit as follows:

The first and simplest reason why I wanted to meet with General MacArthur was that we had never had any personal contacts at all, and I thought that he ought to know his Commander in Chief and that I ought to know the senior field commander in the Far East. I have always regretted that General MacArthur declined the invitations that were extended to him to return to the United States, even if only for a short visit, during his years in Japan. He should have come back to familiarize himself with the situation at home. This is something I have always advocated for our foreign service personnel - that they should spend one year in every four in their own country. Then they would understand what the home folks were thinking.

Events since June had shown me that MacArthur had lost some of his contacts with the country and its people in the many years of his absence. He had been in the Orient for nearly fourteen years then, and all his thoughts were wrapped up in the East. I had made efforts through Harriman and others to let him see the world-wide picture as we saw it in Washington, but I felt that we had had little success. I thought he might adjust more easily if he heard it from me directly.

The Peiping reports of threatened intervention in Korea by the Chinese Communists were another reason for my desire to confer with General MacArthur. I wanted to get the benefit of his firsthand information and judgment.¹⁷

¹⁷Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 362-63. There was considerable speculation in the press at the time of the visit that the President's trip might have been (at least partially) politically motivated. The main argument of the writers was that the President wanted to "cash-in" on General MacArthur's success in Korea. There may have been some truth in these allegations. In an Oral History Interview, Charles S. Murphy (Special Counsel to the President) stated that the visit was originally George Elsey's (Administrative Assistant to the President) idea and was suggested for its public relations value. He went on to say, "... Well, the idea was that President Truman would go out and confer with General MacArthur about the progress of the war and that he would meet him between here and Korea so that General MacArthur would not have to be away from the troops in the field for long. I suppose I would have to say candidly, that among us on the White House staff, at any rate, was the feeling that this would be good public relations, and that, I think, is probably why the President had some distance for it. He just had a distance for public relations stunts. He really did." Transcript, Charles S. Murphy Oral History Interview, May 21, 1969, p. 67, Truman Library.

The President could have ordered General MacArthur home for the visit but he elected not to do so. He also considered, and rejected, a visit to the troops in Korea. The President originally suggested Honolulu for the meeting but General Marshall suggested, and General MacArthur agreed, Wake Island as the meeting place so that MacArthur would not be absent from his headquarters too long.¹⁸ General MacArthur was to complain in his Reminiscences that he had no knowledge of what was going to be discussed at the conference and that he was not allowed to bring any correspondents with him from Japan to Wake Island.¹⁹

The President had originally intended to take all of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with him to the conference but because of the world situation ended up only taking General Bradley and Secretary of the Army Pace with him as military advisors. Other principal attendees from Washington were Ambassador-at-Large Philip C. Jessup; Mr. W. Averell Harriman; and Assistant Secretary of State Dean Rusk. In Hawaii the President had added Admiral Radford, Commander in Chief, Pacific, to his party. The principal attendees from the Far East were General MacArthur; Major General Whitney from his staff; and the Ambassador to Korea, John Muccio.²⁰

¹⁸Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 363. See also Collins, War in Peacetime, p. 150 and MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 360.

¹⁹MacArthur, Reminiscences, pp. 360-61.

²⁰Collins, War in Peacetime, p. 151. See also Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XI-34 and XI-35; and R.H. Rovere and

Upon his arrival at Wake Island the President and General MacArthur talked privately for about an hour. No record of this conversation was made and neither the President nor MacArthur made any official public statements on the details of the conversation at the time. The speculation in the press was that the majority of the private conversation had to do with Formosa, and that MacArthur did the majority of the listening. In his Memoirs President Truman commented thusly about the conversation:

We talked for more than an hour alone.

We discussed the Japanese and the Korean situations.

The General assured me that the victory was won in Korea. He also informed me that the Chinese Communists would not attack and that Japan was ready for a peace treaty.

Then he brought up the subject of his statement about Formosa to the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He said that he was sorry if he had caused any embarrassment. I told him that I considered the incident closed. He said he wanted me to understand that he was not in politics in any way - that he had allowed the politicians to make a "chump" (his word) of him in 1948 and that it would not happen again.

I told him something of our plans for the strengthening of Europe, and he said he understood and that he was sure it would be possible to send one division from Korea to Europe in January 1951. He repeated that the Korean conflict was won and that there was little possibility of the Chinese Communists coming in.

The General seemed genuinely pleased at this opportunity to talk with me, and I found him a most stimulating and interesting person. Our conversation was very friendly - I might say much more so than I had expected.²¹

A. Schlesinger, Jr., The MacArthur Controversy (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965), p. 275.

²¹Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 365.

MacArthur's Reminiscences did not specifically address the private conversation with the President but he did make the following comments on the meeting:

I had been warned about Mr. Truman's quick and violent temper and prejudices, but he radiated nothing but courtesy and good humor during our meeting. He has an engaging personality, a quick and witty tongue, and I liked him from the start. At the conference itself, he seemed to take great pride in his historical knowledge, but, it seemed to me that in spite of his having read much, it was of a superficial character, encompassing facts without the logic and reasoning dictating those facts. Of the Far East he knew little, presenting a strange combination of distorted history and vague hopes that somehow, some way, we could do something to help those struggling against Communism.

. . . The conference itself was innocuous enough. The sketchy agenda contained nothing upon which Washington did not already have my fullest views as they affected my responsibilities either as supreme commander for the Allied powers in Japan or as commander-in-chief for the United Nations in Korea. They dealt with such matters as the administration of Korea when united, its rehabilitation, the treatment of prisoners of war, the economic situation in the Philippines, the security of Indo-China, the progress of a treaty of peace with Japan, routine details of supply logistics for Japan and Korea - nothing on which my views were not known. No new policies, no new strategy of war or international politics, were proposed or discussed. Formosa was not on the agenda.²²

After the private conversation a general meeting was held for the principal attendees.²³ General MacArthur, in response to a question by the President on rehabilitation in

²²MacArthur, Reminiscences, pp. 361-62.

²³Unbeknownst to General MacArthur a secretary was present in the next room and took a shorthand recording of the meeting. According to the President, the secretary (Vernice Anderson, secretary to Ambassador Jessup) had not been directed by anyone in the party to take notes but had done it on her own initiative. General Bradley, upon learning of the shorthand recording on the return trip to the United States, used the notes, along with his own notes of the meeting, to prepare a report on the substance of the meeting. This document was classified Top Secret and General Bradley stated

Korea, stated that rehabilitation could not occur until after military operations were complete. He was very optimistic that "formal resistance will end throughout North and South Korea by Thanksgiving." MacArthur went on to say that resistance in South Korea was so small that it was no problem to his command. As to resistance in North Korea he made the following comment:

. . . In North Korea, unfortunately, they are pursuing a forlorn hope. They have about 100,000 men who were trained as replacements. They are poorly trained, led, and equipped, but they are obstinate and it goes against my grain to have to destroy them. They are only fighting to save face. Orientals prefer to die than to lose face.²⁴

MacArthur then went on to discuss his withdrawal plans for the Eighth Army by Christmas and plans for the rehabilitation and defense of Korea. During this discussion Secretary

that General MacArthur's headquarters received, and signed for, five copies of the report on 27 October 1950. General Bradley's report was "leaked" to the press during the Senate hearings on MacArthur's relief and created a furor among certain Senators. Upon being questioned about the report, General MacArthur stated to the joint committee that he had not bothered to read the report but did state, "I have no doubt that in general they are an accurate report of what took place." LTC Schnabel states that Secretary Pace's report to the Army Policy Council upon his return from Wake Island was identical to General Bradley's notes. See Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XI-34 and XI-35; Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 365; and Collins, War in Peacetime, p. 151-52. Copies of Bradley's memorandum were published in Rovers and Schlesinger, The MacArthur Controversy, pp. 275-85 and by the U.S. Senate in a document by the Committee on Armed Services and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island Conference on October 15, 1950 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951). Data for the remainder of this section are from these sources.

²⁴Rovers and Schlesinger, The MacArthur Controversy, p. 275.

Pace asked General MacArthur, "Is there anything in terms of E.C.A. (Economic Cooperation Administration) an Army co-operation that we might do to help you?" MacArthur replied, "No commander in the history of war has ever had more complete and adequate support from all agencies in Washington that I have."²⁵

The subject then turned to possible Communist intervention. The President specifically asked General MacArthur, "What are the chances for Chinese or Soviet interference?" To this General MacArthur replied:

Very little. Had they interfered in the first or second months it would have been decisive. We are no longer fearful of their intervention. We no longer stand hat in hand. The Chinese have 300,000 men in Manchuria. Of these probably not more than 100/125,000 are distributed along the Yalu River. Only 50/60,000 could be gotten across the Yalu River. They have no air force. Now that we have bases for our Air Force in Korea, if the Chinese tried to get down to Pyongyang there would be the greatest slaughter.

With the Russians it is a little different. They have an air force in Siberia and a fairly good one, with excellent pilots equipped with some jets and B-25 and B-29 planes. They can put 1,000 planes in the air with some 2/300 more than the 5th and 7th Soviet fleets. They are probably no match for our Air Force. The Russians have no ground troops available for North Korea. They would have difficulty in putting troops into the field. It would take six weeks to get a division across, and six weeks brings the winter. The only other combination would be Russian air support of Chinese ground troops. Russian air is deployed in a semicircle through Mukden and Harbin, but the coordination between the Russian air and the Chinese ground would be so flimsy that I believe Russian air would bomb the Chinese as often as they would bomb us²⁶

²⁵Ibid., p. 278.

²⁶Ibid., p. 280-81. In his oral interview Charles Murphy was to recollect, ". . . and General MacArthur talked about the course of the war. That was the first time I had

The President then brought up the question of a Japanese peace treaty and MacArthur's requirements in Japan. During this discussion General Bradley asked General MacArthur that since it looked like the Eighth Army was going to return to Japan shortly could a division be made available to Europe by January, to which MacArthur indicated that it could. Then

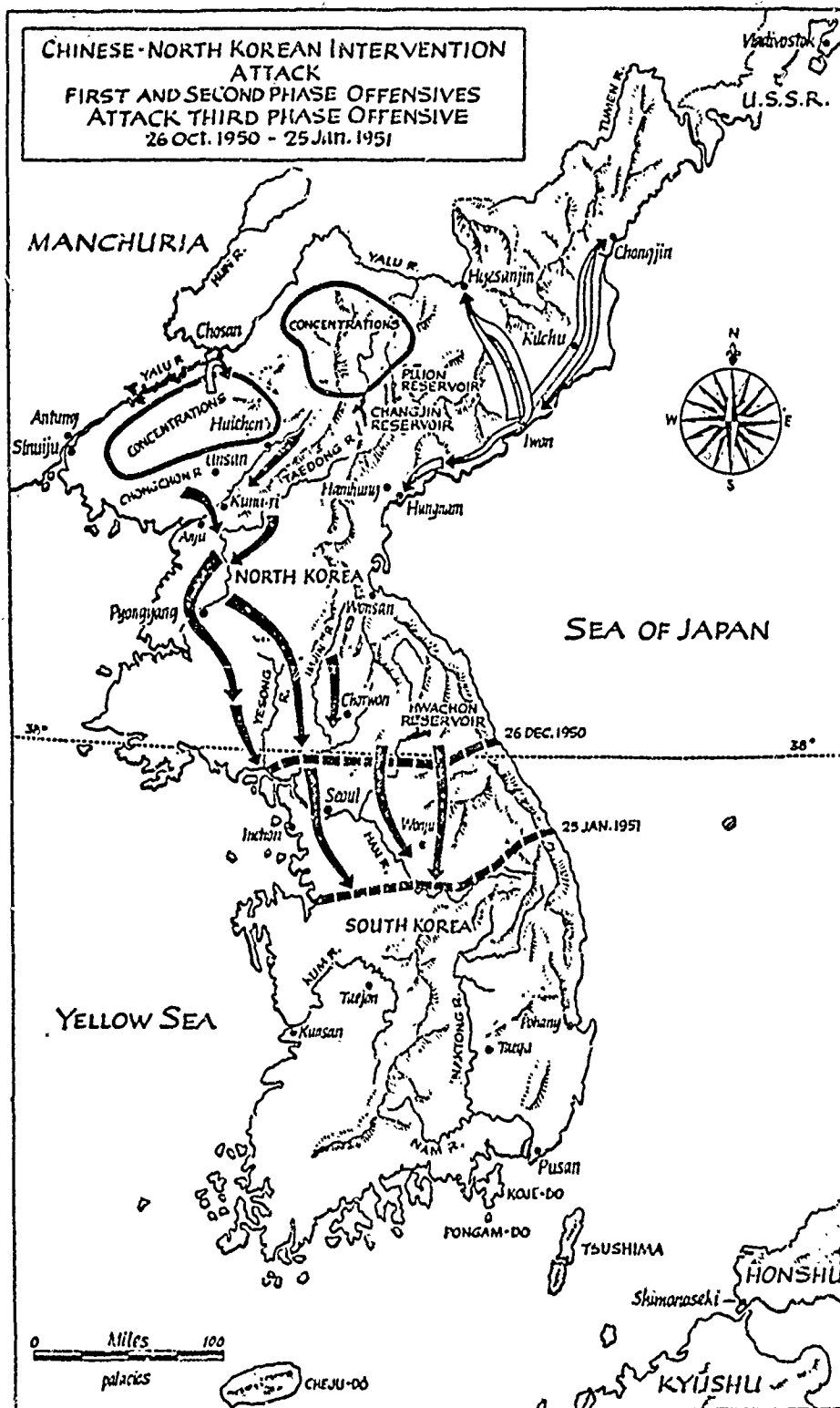
ever seen him. He spoke very persuasively, very plainly, very understandably. He just laid it out cold. And when he explained why and how we had won the war and why it was impossible for the other side to do anything about it, why, I understood precisely what he was saying, and I was convinced completely. And the question came up about the possible intervention by the Chinese and he said they could not intervene effectively. Not that they would not, but that they could not, as a military matter" Transcript, Murphy Oral History Interview, May 21, 1969, p. 68, Truman Library. General MacArthur was quite adamant in his Reminiscences that the Bradley version of the meeting was incorrect concerning the intervention question. He commented, "My views were asked as to the chance of Red China's intervention. I replied that the answer could only be speculative; that neither the State Department through its diplomatic listening posts abroad, nor the Central Intelligence Agency to whom a field commander must look for guidance as to a foreign nation's intention to move from peace to war, reported any evidence of intent by the Peiping government to intervene with major forces; that my own local intelligence, which I regarded as unsurpassed anywhere, reported heavy concentrations near the Yalu border in Manchuria whose movements were indeterminate; that my own military estimate was that with our largely unopposed air forces, with their potential capable of destroying, at will, bases of attack and lines of supply north as well as south of the Yalu, no Chinese military commander would hazard the commitment of large forces upon the devastated Korean peninsula. The risk of their utter destruction through lack of supply would be too great. There was no disagreement from anyone. This episode was later completely misrepresented to the public through an alleged but spurious report in an effort to pervert the position taken by me. It was an ingeniously fostered implication that I flatly and unequivocally predicted that under no circumstances would the Chinese Communists enter the Korean War. This is prevarication." MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 362.

followed a general discussion of Pacific security and the support of the Rhee government. The question of Formosa was mentioned and the President stated, "General MacArthur and I have talked fully about Formosa. There is no need to cover that subject again. The General and I are in complete agreement" ²⁷

At the end of the general conference the President stated that the meeting has "been a most satisfactory conference." When he was about to depart at the airfield, the President surprised General MacArthur by presenting to him the Distinguished Service Medal, the General's fifth receipt of the medal.

Thus ended the first, and only, face to face meeting of President Truman and General MacArthur.

²⁷Ibid., p. 284.



Duplication from
Matthew B. Ridgway, The Korean War, p. 132.

CHAPTER VII

A NEW WAR

During the remainder of October the United Nations forces seemed to justify the optimism of General MacArthur. The drive north by both Eighth Army and X Corps, which had started in September, proceeded almost exactly as planned. Although most of MacArthur's principal staff officers and General Walker had assumed, once the capture of Seoul had been accomplished, that the X Corps would pass to the operational control of Eighth Army, X Corps remained directly under GHQ and was employed as a separate command in the drive north. This resulted in a lack of effective cooperation between the two organizations in that many actions had to be coordinated through the GHQ. This also caused a considerable delay in passing intelligence between the two commands and getting timely decisions to common problems. To complicate this already rather unusual relationship, General Walker was given the logistic responsibility for the X Corps. This splitting of the command and responsibilities for the forces in Korea was to become more and more of a problem as the forces advanced north and the lateral communication between the commands became more difficult.

A CHANGE IN POLICY

On 24 October, in order to exploit the favorable battlefield situation, MacArthur removed all restrictions on the use of non-Republic of Korea forces in the border provinces. In a message to his commanders General MacArthur ordered them to "drive forward with all speed and full utilization of forces."¹ These instructions were in direct conflict with the instructions the JCS had sent MacArthur on 27 September where they had specified that, ". . . as a matter of policy, no non-Korean ground forces will be used in the northeast provinces bordering the Soviet Union or in the area along the Manchurian border."² The order was given without any consultation with Washington. Upon finding out about the new order the JCS queried MacArthur about the change in policy. The message to MacArthur was mild in nature and seemed to condone the action. The message said in part:

While the Joint Chiefs of Staff realize that you undoubtedly had sound reasons for issuing these instructions they would like to be informed of them, as your action is a matter of some concern here.³

¹Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1969), p. 462.

²James F. Schnabel, Policy and Direction: The First Year, U.S. Army in the Korean War (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, forthcoming), p. X-15 and XII-6.

³Ibid., p. XII-6. Dean Acheson was to comment thusly on the JCS reaction, ". . . So stunned was the Pentagon that the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent out a timorous inquiry to Mac Arthur. . . ." Acheson, Present at the Creation, p. 462.

MacArthur promptly replied to the JCS inquiry. LTC Schnabel gave the following synopsis of the MacArthur reply:

MacArthur defended his action with characteristic vigor. He held that his order had been prompted by military necessity since his Republic of Korea forces had neither sufficient strength nor enough skilled leadership to take and hold the border areas of North Korea. As to the legality of his decision, MacArthur pointed out that the Joint Chiefs had told him that the directive of 27 September was not final, that it might require modification in accordance with developments. For additional justification, General MacArthur emphasized that the Joint Chiefs had not actually banned the use of other than Republic of Korea forces but had merely stated that it should not be done as a matter of policy. Finally, in his mind, the instructions from the Secretary of Defense on 30 September, which had assured him, "We want you to feel unhampered tactically and strategically to proceed north of the parallel," had certainly modified any prior instructions from the Joint Chiefs and he had proceeded to issue his orders on that basis. He made no move to placate his superiors. While he assured them that he understood their concern, he also hinted of dire developments if he took any other course and clinched his argument by claiming that "This entire subject was covered in my conference at Wake Island."⁴

Why the JCS accepted this violation of their orders remains a mystery. Schnabel's manuscript merely states that after receiving MacArthur's reply, ". . . Thereafter, the Joint Chiefs allowed General MacArthur's order to stand."⁵ General Collins, in his book on this period, commented on the incident:

. . . This was the first, but not the last, stretching of MacArthur's orders beyond JCS instructions. If the Chiefs noted this - and I have no recollection that we did - we offered no objection.⁶

⁴Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XII-6 and XII-7. Schnabel went on to comment that "none of the other persons attending the conference on 15 October recorded any mention of the use of non-ROK soldiers along the Manchurian and Soviet borders."

⁵Ibid., p. XII-7

⁶Collins, War in Peacetime, p. 177.

CHINESE INTERVENTION

The main purpose behind the instructions to MacArthur to not use non-Republic of Korea forces near the border was to reduce the possibility of mainland Chinese or Soviet intervention into the conflict. The question if MacArthur's audacious action might have caused the intervention by the Communist Chinese becomes an academic question in the light of data collected after the fact - the Chinese were already in Korea in force prior to MacArthur sending out his instructions.⁷ The fact that the Chinese were massed in Manchuria near the Korean border and very capable of intervention was well known to both Washington and Tokyo, but both headquarters still believed that Communist China was bluffing and would not take this course of action. In addition, in mid-October American reconnaissance planes flying near the border had spotted almost one hundred Russian-built fighters on Antung airfield in Manchuria but the seriousness of the discovery was minimized by the Far East Command by evaluating it as a show of strength rather than a real threat.⁸

The first real proof that Communist China's threats to intervene if U.N. forces crossed the 38th parallel were serious, came on 25 October when South Korean forces from the 1st Republic of Korea Division (a part of Eighth Army's I U.S. Corps) engaged a Chinese force and captured the first

⁷Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. XIII-1.

⁸Ibid., p. XII-30.

Chinese Communist soldiers of the Korean War. Interrogation revealed that they were from organized Chinese units and that Chinese troops were in North Korea in large numbers. At almost the same time X Corps units on the east coast of Korea discovered that they also were in contact with Chinese units, capturing 25 prisoners by 31 October.⁹ The discovery that Communist Chinese units were in Korea and operating as Chinese units was reported up through the chain of command to Washington but was not immediately accepted as proof of a full scale intervention. An example of this was an evaluation by MacArthur's G2, Major General Willoughby, on 28 October when he said:

From a tactical standpoint, with victorious United States divisions in full deployment, it would appear that the auspicious time for intervention has long since passed; it is difficult to believe that such a move, if planned, would have been postponed to a time when remnant North Korean forces have been reduced to a low point of effectiveness.¹⁰

Likewise, as late as 30 October, the JCS were not convinced that this was a full scale intervention though they expressed much apprehension about the reports of Chinese troops operating in Korea and realized they could be a real threat to the U.N. Command.¹¹

In the west, despite the indications of Chinese intervention, General Walker continued to carry out his orders from General MacArthur and continued the advance of

⁹Ibid., pp. XIII-1 and XIII-2.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. XIII-2.

¹¹Ibid., pp. XIII-2 and XIII-3.

his units towards the Manchurian border. During the last week in October and the first week in November his units met increasing Chinese resistance resulting in the collapse of the II Republic of Korea Corps and the severe mauling of some units of the I U.S. Corps. This caused Walker to stop his drive towards the border and to withdraw his forces about 20 miles back to a defensive position behind the Chongchon River. General MacArthur was quick to question Walker on this change in plans but Walker assured him that this was only a temporary measure while he reorganized his troops, secured his flanks, and built up his supplies for a resumption of the attack. The Chinese troops meanwhile disengaged and pulled back to the north.¹² In the east the X Corps fared better than Eighth Army. After an initial slowing of lead elements by the Chinese, reinforcements were brought forward and destroyed the Chinese force. As in the west, the Chinese forces then disengaged and pulled back to the north.¹³

REACTION TO INTERVENTION

Prior to the late October intervention of Chinese units, the United States had been making tentative plans to

¹²Ibid., pp. XIII-4 through XIII-6. General Walker attributed the collapse of the ROK units as an "intense, psychological fear of Chinese intervention and previous complacency and overconfidence in all ROK ranks."

¹³Ibid., pp. XIII-6 and XIII-7. See also J. Lawton Collins, War in Peacetime (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1969), pp. 191-96.

reduce the support to Korea. Even though there was not full acceptance of the idea of a full scale intervention in Korea by the Chinese Communists, it was evident that these plans would have to be reversed, even if only temporarily.

Lieutenant General Charles L. Bolte, Department of Army G3, who had flown to Tokyo on 31 October to talk to MacArthur, discussed this subject with General MacArthur and his staff and also with the major commanders in Korea. After his discussions he reported to Washington that full support of MacArthur should be continued and that he was ". . . convinced that any deferment, cut-back, or cancellation of requested units, individuals, or materiel would be premature."¹⁴ The JCS also reversed actions they had taken to reduce contributions from other nations and recommended to the State Department to defer any actions taken to accomplish this aim.

Taking cognizance of the mounting evidence of intervention by Chinese units, and the confusing and conflicting intelligence reports about their intentions, the President, on 3 November, directed the JCS to ask MacArthur for an up-to-date estimate of the situation. MacArthur's reply on 4 November was, in the light of the situation then existing in Korea, strangely calm and reassuring.¹⁵ He stated it was "impossible at this time to authoritatively appraise the intention of the Chinese intervention." He went on to

¹⁴Ibid., p. XIII-8.

¹⁵The entire text of the message is printed in Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 373. Synopsis in text is from this reference.

enumerate four possibilities: first, a full scale intervention proclaiming such a course at the appropriate time; second, providing of covert military assistance; third, permitting Chinese "volunteers" to cross the border to assist their North Korean friends; and lastly, a limited intervention in the belief that no non-Republic of Korea forces would be used in the northern provinces. He discounted the first possibility as follows:

The first contingency would represent a momentous decision of the greatest international importance. While it is a distinct possibility, and many foreign experts predict such a action, there are many fundamental logical reasons against it and sufficient evidence has not yet come to hand to warrant its immediate acceptance.

He went on to say that a combination of the last three contingencies seemed to be more likely and ended the message with the following, "I recommend against hasty conclusions which might be premature and believe that a final appraisal should await a more complete accumulation of military facts."

President Truman and his advisors choose to agree with MacArthur's appraisal and discounted the "distinct possibility" of full scale intervention. They interpreted the message as assuring and without any note of impending emergency.¹⁶ This optimism was soon lost. On 5 November

¹⁶Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, Vol. II, Years of Trial and Hope (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1956), p. 373. See also Collins, War in Peacetime, p. 199 and Acheson, Present at the Creation, p. 463.

MacArthur directed his Far East Air Forces to destroy the Korean ends of all international bridges on the Manchurian border as a part of a concerted effort to knock the North Koreans and their new allies out of the war. He was careful to warn "that there must be no border violations and that all targets close to or on the border must be attacked only under visual bombing conditions."¹⁷ The information that he was planning to take out the bridges was passed to Washington by MacArthur in a routine manner during a teleconference with the Army staff on 6 November. In addition to this notification, MacArthur's Air Commander in the Far East, General Stratemeyer, sent a message to Air Force authorities in Washington informing them of MacArthur's orders. This second message was immediately brought to the attention of Mr. Robert Lovett, the Under Secretary of Defense, who questioned the advisability of the action and if the advantages to be gained by the bombings would offset the considerable danger of inadvertently hitting Chinese territory. Mr. Lovett at once contacted Secretary Acheson and the two of them, plus Dean Rusk (Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs), discussed the problems involved with the proposed bombings. The State Department was concerned on three counts: that the United States had promised the British not to take actions which might involve attacks on Manchuria without

¹⁷Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XIII-17 and XIII-18.

consulting with them; that the United States was trying to have a resolution passed by the Security Council calling on the Chinese to halt action in Korea, the passage of which would be jeopardized if bombs fell in Manchuria; and the possible Soviet reaction in light of the Chinese-Soviet mutual-assistance treaty.¹⁸ The three agreed that the planned attack of the bridges should be delayed until the situation became clearer. Lovett called Secretary Marshall who agreed that, unless the security of MacArthur's forces was threatened, the bombing was unwise. Lovett then instructed Air Force Secretary Finletter to inform the JCS of the attitude of the State and Defense Departments and to instruct them to tell MacArthur to delay the attack until the President could be contacted for a decision. At the same time Acheson called the President (who was in Independence, Missouri) for instructions. The President said he would only approve the bombing if a failure to do so would cause "an immediate and serious threat to the security of our troops."¹⁹ Acheson responded that none of MacArthur's reports had so far indicated any serious threat so the President directed that MacArthur be questioned why he found this sudden action necessary. The Defense Department was told, through Acheson, that the President directed them to take any actions necessary

¹⁸Ibid., pp. XIII-18 and XIII-19.

¹⁹Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 374.

upon MacArthur's reply.²⁰ The JCS sent an immediate message to MacArthur directing him to cancel any international bridge bombings while consideration was going on at the governmental level. The JCS mentioned that one of the factors for the halt was relations with the British. They then specifically told MacArthur to halt all bombings within five miles of the border until further notice and ended the message by requesting, "Urgently need your estimate of the situation and the reason for ordering bombing of Yalu River bridges as indicated."²¹

The JCS message brought an immediate angry reply from MacArthur. The thrust of the message was entirely different from his 4 November message and its urgency and import surprised Washington. The reply to the JCS read:

Men and material in large force are pouring across all the bridges over the Yalu from Manchuria. This movement not only jeopardizes but threatens the ultimate destruction of the forces under my command. The actual movement across the river can be accomplished under cover of darkness and the distance between the river and our lines is so short that the forces can be deployed against

²⁰Ibid., pp. 374-75. See also Acheson, Present at the Creation, pp. 463-64 and Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XIII-18 through XIII-20.

²¹Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. XIII-20. Schnabel went on to make the following comment in a footnote on the same page, "This series of actions reveals clearly the speed with which important decisions could be taken and the 'streamlining' of the normal policy-making methods. Stratemeyer's message had been received in Washington about three and one-half hours before his planes were scheduled to take off on their missions. In the interim every appropriate official within the Defense and State Departments had been consulted and the Presidential decision based on their advice had been reached. The JCS had sent out the order to MacArthur only an hour and twenty minutes before the B-29's were scheduled to take off from Japan."

our troops without being seriously subjected to air interdiction. The only way to stop this reinforcement of the enemy is the destruction of these bridges and the subjection of all installations in the north area supporting the enemy advance to the maximum of our air destruction. Every hour that this is postponed will be paid for dearly in American and other United Nations blood. The main crossing at Sinuiju was to be hit within the next few hours and the mission is actually being mounted. Under the gravest protest that I can make, I am suspending this strike and carrying out your instructions. What I had ordered is entirely within the scope of the rules of war and the resolutions and directions which I have received from the United Nations and constitutes no slightest act of belligerency against Chinese territory, in spite of the outrageous international lawlessness emanating therefrom. I cannot overemphasize the disastrous effect, both physical and psychological, that will result from the restrictions which you are imposing. I trust that the matter be immediately brought to the attention of the President as I believe your instructions may well result in a calamity of major proportion for which I cannot accept the responsibility without his personal and direct understanding of the situation. Time is so essential that I request immediate reconsideration of your decision pending which complete compliance will of course be given to your order.²²

General Bradley immediately called the President and read him the message. The President, though still bothered by the implications of inadvertently bombing Manchuria, told Bradley to let MacArthur go ahead with his plans.

The pique of the JCS is evident in their reply to MacArthur giving him authority to go ahead with the bombings.

Note the reemphasis on keeping the JCS informed:

The situation depicted in your message (of November 6) is considerably changed from that reported in last sentence your message (of November 4) which was our last report from you. We agree that the destruction of the Yalu bridges would contribute materially to the security of the forces under your command unless this action resulted in increased Chinese Communist effort and even

²²Fromm, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 375.

Soviet contribution in response to what they might well construe as an attack on Manchuria. Such a result would not only endanger your forces but would enlarge the area of conflict and U.S. involvement to a most dangerous degree.

However in view of first sentence your message (of November 6) you are authorized to go ahead with your planned bombings in Korea near the frontier including targets at Sinuiju and Korean end of Yalu bridges provided that at time of receipt of this message you still find such action essential to safety of your forces. The above does not authorize the bombing of any dams or power plants on the Yalu River.

Because of necessity for maintaining optimum position with United Nations policy and directives and because it is vital in the national interests of the U.S. to localize the fighting in Korea it is important that extreme care be taken to avoid violation of Manchurian territory and airspace and to report promptly hostile action from Manchuria.

It is essential that we be kept informed of important changes in situation as they occur and that your estimate as requested in our (message of November 6) be submitted as soon as possible.²³

REEVALUATION

On the same day that MacArthur's protest reached Washington a new intelligence estimate of Chinese intentions was furnished to Washington by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). It estimated that 30 to 40,000 Chinese were currently in North Korea with as many as 700,000 (350,000 of which were ground troops) in Manchuria ready to be employed against MacArthur's forces. The CIA estimated that the forces would be capable of halting the U.N. advance by piecemeal commitment or, if they choose to make an all-out offensive, could drive the U.N. forces back to defensive

²³Ibid., p. 376.

positions to the south. The report ended with this warning:

A likely and logical development of the present situation is that the opposing sides will build up their combat power in successive increments to checkmate the other until forces of major magnitude are involved. At any point the danger is present that the situation may get out of control and lead to a general war.²⁴

This was just the situation the United States wished to avoid.

On November 6 MacArthur issued a special communique from his headquarters in which he stated that the defeat of the North Korean forces had been virtually complete prior to the intervention of the Communist Chinese. He then summed up his present situation thusly:

. . . While the North Korean forces with which we were initially engaged have been destroyed or rendered impotent for military action, a new and fresh army faces us, backed up by a possibility of large reserves and adequate supplies within easy reach of the enemy but beyond the limits of our present sphere of military action . . .²⁵

He concluded the communique by stating his mission continued to be "limited to the destruction of those forces now engaged against us in North Korea . . ." This release was to be just the first of many public complaints that MacArthur was to make about the restrictions to his operations in the Far East.

The following day MacArthur sent his revised estimate of the situation to the JCS as requested. In it he confirmed that the Chinese threat was a real and growing one and that

²⁴Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XIII-24 and XIII-25.

²⁵MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 368.

if the Chinese reinforced their troops in North Korea they could cause a withdrawal of the U.N. forces. Even in the face of this possibility he stated that he was still planning to resume his advance in the west (Eighth Army) as soon as possible to try to regain the initiative, providing he could stop the flow of enemy reinforcements. He said, "Only through such an offensive effort can any accurate measure be taken of enemy strength." He went on to say again that he was convinced that the Yalu bridges must be bombed and that this action was so clearly defensive in nature that it was hard to imagine that it would provoke further intervention or general war. He concluded the estimate with a promise that there would be no violation of Manchurian or Siberian borders nor would he attack the hydroelectric installations. He again stated he would continue furnishing complete daily situation reports.²⁶

HOT PURSUIT

MacArthur sent another message on the 7th, this one concerning the sanctuary for Chinese planes behind the Manchurian border. He very strongly pointed out that his present instructions of not violating Chinese air space was

²⁶Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XIII-25 and XIII-26. See also Collins, War in Peacetime, p. 202, and Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 377.

seriously hampering his air operations along the border, especially with respect to the destruction of the international bridges. He continued by saying that this was becoming a very serious morale problem and was effecting combat efficiency. He ended his message by saying, "Unless corrective measures are promptly taken this factor can assume decisive proportions. Request instructions for dealing with this new and threatening development."²⁷ Even though the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Defense Department agreed emphatically with General MacArthur on this point, because of political considerations, permission to enter Chinese air space was not granted. Efforts were to continue during the remainder of November, by both MacArthur's headquarters and the Defense Department, to relax the restrictions to allow at least the right of "hot pursuit" for six to eight miles inside the Manchurian border, but permission was never granted. Secretary Marshall later testified at the Senate hearings that he had recommended approval of this plan and that Secretary Acheson and the President agreed that it was desirable, but because our allies were unanimously against the plan, the right of "hot pursuit" was never realized.²⁸ Due to the restriction placed upon them, and the fierce defense by the sanctuary-safe Chinese aircraft and air defense

²⁷Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 377.

²⁸Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XIII-29 through XIII-36. See also Collins, War in Peacetime, pp. 203-204 and MacArthur, Reminiscences, pp. 368-70.

weapons, MacArthur's Air Force was only able to destroy four of the twelve bridges they attacked during November. On 5 December the bridge attacks were called off because the Yalu was becoming frozen over in many places and the enemy was constructing many pontoon bridges across the river at critical points.²⁹

REVIEW OF MAC ARTHUR'S MISSION

The Chinese intervention of late October and early November caused the JCS to question the validity of continuing MacArthur's mission unchanged. On 8 November they sent MacArthur a message referencing their 27 September directive pointing out that the entry of major Chinese forces seemed to be a reality and that his mission of the destruction of North Korean forces may have to be reexamined. This could, in the face of increased Chinese pressure, result in discontinuing the attack to the border, reverting to the defensive, and consolidating gains made since the September offensive.³⁰

In his reply MacArthur protested against any re-examination of his mission. He reminded the JCS of their special instructions of 10 October where they had told him that in the case of the employment of major Chinese Communist units against his command he was to continue the action as

²⁹Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XIII-26 through XIII-28.

³⁰Ibid., p. XIII-37.

long as he believed his forces had a reasonable chance of success. MacArthur believed this "exactly defined his course of action in this present situation."³¹ He was definitely against following any other course of action. He believed that not following his original instructions would weaken the effectiveness of the United Nations effort in Korea. The General believed his airpower could restrict the number of Chinese replacements coming into Korea to such a level that he could destroy the forces already there. He told the JCS he planned to launch his attack about 15 November and continue on to the border. He explained that not to continue the attack:

. . . would completely destroy the morale of my forces and its psychological consequence would be inestimable. It would condemn us to an indefinite retention of our military forces along difficult defense lines in North Korea and would unquestionably arouse such resentment among the South Koreans that their forces would collapse or might turn against us.³²

He went on to say that anyone who believed the Chinese would honor any agreements about not moving southward, once established in North Korea, was not being realistic.

MacArthur then made a violent protest against the British actions in this crisis. He called their plan of establishing a buffer zone south of the Yalu, appeasement, much like their agreement with Hitler in 1938. He declared:

³¹Ibid., p. XIII-37.

³²Ibid., p. XIII-38.

To give up any portion of North Korea to the aggression of the Chinese Communists would be the greatest defeat of the free world in recent times. Indeed, to yield to so immoral a proposition would bankrupt our leadership and influence in Asia and render untenable our position both politically and militarily.³³

MacArthur then recommended that the United Nations pass a resolution telling the Chinese Communists to fall back north of the Yalu "on the pain of military sanctions of the United Nations should they fail to do so." MacArthur ended his protest to the JCS suggestion on a note of confidence. He declared that if "our determination and indomitable will do not desert us," that victory could be achieved.³⁴

THE NSC MEETS³⁵

In spite of MacArthur's renewed optimism and his desire to continue with his present mission, the President and his advisors still had fundamental questions as to the correct course of action to adopt in Korea. The JCS was instructed to study the Chinese intervention and prepare their views and recommendations for presentation at a meeting of the NSC. The JCS saw three possibilities as to the intentions of the Chinese: first, a desire to set up a buffer zone along the Yalu River to protect their interests; secondly, to force us into a war of attrition to make us more vulnerable to Soviet attack elsewhere; and lastly, the chance that they

³³Ibid., p. XIII-40.

³⁴Ibid., p. XIII-40.

³⁵Unless otherwise specified the references for this section are Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 378-381, and Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XIII-40 through XIII-50.

actually planned to force the U.N. forces completely off the Korean peninsula. With these three possibilities in mind the JCS recommended:

1. Every effort should be expended as a matter of urgency to settle the problem of Chinese Communist intervention in Korea by political means, preferably through the United Nations, to include reassurances to the Chinese Communists with respect to our intent, direct negotiations through our Allies and the Interim Committee with the Chinese Communist Government, and by any other available means.
2. Pending further clarification as to the military objectives of the Chinese Communists and the extent of their intended commitments, the missions assigned to the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command, should be kept under review, but should not be changed.
3. The United States should develop its plans and make its preparations on the basis that the risk of global war is increased.

General Bradley represented the JCS at the NSC meeting on 9 November. The President did not attend the meeting but was given a full report of the proceedings afterward. General Bradley explained in detail the JCS analysis of the Chinese intervention, pointing out the possible intentions of the Chinese Communists and the JCS recommendations on actions to be taken. He said that if the Communist Chinese only desired a buffer zone they might be in a mood to negotiate but not if their intentions were a war of attrition or all-out intervention. Bradley commented that, in his opinion, the U.N. forces could hold in the general area that they were in but couldn't tell how long it would be before the Chinese pressure would require the attack of Manchurian bases. He noted to the group that MacArthur thought his Air Force could reduce the flow of replacements by bombing the Yalu

bridges and interdiction, but that he (Bradley), thought this was rather optimistic.

Secretary Marshall pointed out to the NSC the wide dispersion of the forces in Korea but Bradley commented that was as a result of the instructions to MacArthur to occupy the entire country.

Secretary Acheson queried Bradley if there was a better defensive line, from a military point of view, than the present one and Bradley replied "that from a purely military point of view the further back the line was the easier it would be to maintain." He pointed out, however, the fact that any voluntary withdrawal might lose us support and decrease the Republic of Korea's will to fight.

Acheson then expressed the thought that he felt the Russians might be interested in the buffer zone concept and said we should privately check out this possibility. He added, however, that realistically, it probably wouldn't work out as the Soviets would probably insist on complete withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea which would essentially hand the country over to the communists.

At the end of the discussion the NSC recommended that General MacArthur's instructions should not be changed as of yet, and that he should have no further restrictions imposed that would curtail his freedom of action, militarily, except the bombing of Manchuria. In addition it was recommended

that the State Department seek ways of negotiating with the Chinese Communists though it was realized that no direct channels were open to Peiping.³⁶

NOVEMBER, 1950

The President was to summarize the action taken by the Administration after the 9 November NSC meeting thusly:

The month of November 1950 saw us, therefore, occupied in three moves, so far as Korea was concerned. One was to reassure our allies in Europe, especially the British and the French, that we had no intention of widening the conflict or of abandoning our commitments in Europe for new entanglements in Asia. The second was in the United Nations, where we sought the maximum support for our resistance against the Chinese intervention in Korea, without, however, pushing the U.N. toward military sanctions against Peiping - which would have meant war. The third effort was directed toward ascertaining the strength and direction and aim of the Chinese Communist effort.³⁷

³⁶The primary participants were to point to the 9 November NSC meeting, and the three following weeks, as critical. They believed that this was the last time the United States had any freedom to take action to avoid the military disaster it would realize in December. General Collins was to comment, "So far as I know, the President took no formal action on these recommendations, though all were put into effect. In retrospect, the most important outcome of the meeting was that it permitted General MacArthur to go ahead with his plans for an attack, or reconnaissance in force, to the Yalu, a move that was destined to lead to one of the few military defeats in United States history. Collins, War in Peacetime, p. 203. Dean Acheson was even more critical in his comments. He pointed out, "Here, I believe, the Government missed its last chance to halt the march to disaster in Korea. All the President's advisers in this matter, civilian and military, knew that something was badly wrong, though what it was, how to find out, and what to do about it they muffed." He added that an unprecedented number of meetings between the State and Defense Departments and the JCS, and between the two secretaries and the President were held during this period. He went on to say, "I have an unhappy conviction that none of us, myself prominently included, served him as he was entitled to

General MacArthur's and General Walker's plans to start the Eighth Army moving north again by the 15th of November were delayed due to supply problems. It was not until after the 20th of November that Eighth Army had adequate supplies available to restart their offensive. The X Corps, on the east, was still moving forward, but much more cautiously. Between the two forces were over 30 miles of unprotected mountainous terrain with little means of lateral communication. Plans had been considered, but held in abeyance, to reorient the X Corps direction of attack more to the west so as to make the two forces more mutual supporting. On 24 November Eighth Army started their offensive towards the North Korean-Manchurian border. MacArthur released a special communique upon the launching of the action by the Eighth Army. In it he announced the offensive saying now the "western sector of the pincer" was moving forward "in an effort to complete the compression and close the vise." The

be served." Acheson concluded, after castigating MacArthur for his tactics and the Administration (to include himself) for lack of adequate action, his discussion of the period by stating, "While everyone acted correctly, no one I suspect, was ever quite satisfied with himself afterward. Undoubtedly the same might have been true if we had played it the other way. It is a good bet that had we done so MacArthur's reputation would be higher today." Acheson, Present at the Creation, pp. 456-68.

³⁷Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 381.

communiqué ended with the following paragraph:

If successful this should for all practical purposes end the war, restore peace and unity in Korea, enable the prompt withdrawal of United Nations military forces, and permit the complete assumption by the Korean people and nation of full sovereignty and international equality. It is that for which we fight.³⁸

On the same day that General Walker's Eighth Army started its offensive the JCS forwarded a State Department draft message to General MacArthur for his consideration and comment. The draft discussed a compromise solution which had been worked out by members of the State and Defense Departments. Upon forwarding the draft, General Collins informed MacArthur that the "question of halting short of the border had been raised because of the growing concern among other members of the United Nations."³⁹ He pointed out to MacArthur that the United States expected action within the United Nations which would place restrictions on MacArthur's advance and that many countries favored the establishment of a demilitarized zone between the U.N. forces and the border. The draft essentially recommended that MacArthur, once his forces approached the Yalu, pull his forces back and secure the terrain dominating the approaches from the river. MacArthur replied that this action was not feasible because

³⁸U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services and Committee on Foreign Relations, Compilation of Certain Published Information on the Military Situation in the Far East, 82d Cong., 1st Sess. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951), pp. 133-34.

³⁹Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. XIV-23.

there was no good defensible terrain except the river itself and that any failure of the U.N. Command not to achieve its publicly stated objective would be viewed by the "Korean people as betrayal" and the other Asians as "weakness and appeasement."⁴⁰

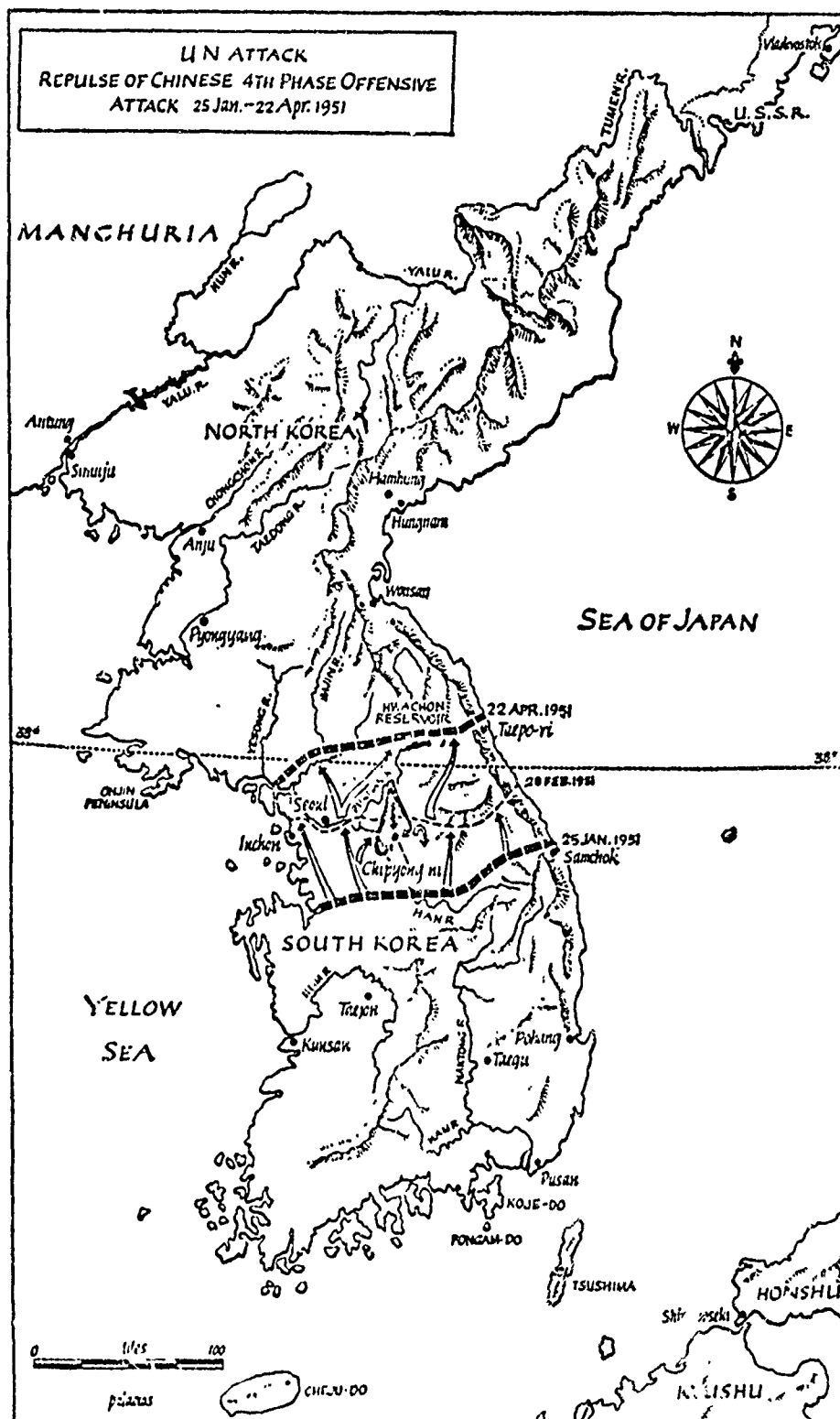
The Eighth Army's advance was short lived. After dark on the 25th, strong Chinese Communist forces fell on Walker's central and eastern units. By noon on the 27th, Eighth Army's advance had been completely stopped, and they had started to withdraw. Walker promptly informed Tokyo that the Chinese were attacking in force and on the following day amplified his report by telling MacArthur that he was under attack by some 200,000 Chinese and that he was sure the Chinese had opened a general offensive. On the 27th and 28th X Corps was also attacked in strength by the Chinese forces.

On the 18th, prior to Eighth Army resuming the offense General MacArthur had assured the JCS that his Air Forces had been successful in isolating the battle area. He had had them pay particular attention to the wide gap between Eighth Army and X Corps but the Air Force had found no evidence of enemy units. The events of 25-28 November soon proved these assurances faulty, the Chinese were in the battle area, and in large numbers. The reports from Korea convinced MacArthur that this was a major Chinese offensive.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. XIV-27 and XIV-28.

As he radioed the JCS on 28 November, "No pretext of minor support under the guise of volunteerism or other subterfuge now has the slightest validity. We face an entirely new war."⁴¹

⁴¹Ibid., p. XV-2



Duplication from
Matthew B. Ridgway, The Korean War, p. 136.

CHAPTER VIII

THE U.N. ON THE DEFENSIVE

NEAR DISASTER ON THE YALU

The U.N. forces were indeed facing a new war. In his message to the JCS on 28 November, MacArthur had claimed that the 24 November Eighth Army advance had forced the Communist Chinese to attack prematurely. His theory was that the Chinese had been planning for a Spring offensive when their personnel and logistic buildup would be more complete, and when the weather would be more favorable. It is possible that this theory may have been correct, but it did not alter the reality of the present situation; that the Chinese were attacking in such force that the U.N. Command was forced to change from the offensive to the defensive. MacArthur then shifted the responsibility for the next decision to the Administration by stating:

It is quite evident that our present strength of force is not sufficient to meet this undeclared war by the Chinese with the inherent advantages which accrue thereby to them. The resulting situation presents an entire new picture which broadens the potentialities to world-embracing considerations beyond the sphere of decision by the Theater Commander.¹

¹James F. Schnabel, Policy and Direction: The First Year, U.S. Army in the Korean War (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, forthcoming), p. XV-3.

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¹James F. Schnabel, Policy and Direction: The First Year, U.S. Army in the Korean War (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, forthcoming), p. XV-3.

In a special communique which General MacArthur issued on 28 November, he publicly stated much of what he had said earlier in the day to the JCS. He stated that the United Nations faced an entirely new war and that the massive Chinese intervention ended any hopes of bringing the war to a rapid close. He also brought up his earlier complaint about the "privileged sanctuary north of the international border." He ended the communique by commenting:

This situation, repugnant as it may be, poses issues beyond the authority of the United Nations military council - issues which must find their solution within the councils of the United Nations and chancelleries of the world.²

That same day General MacArthur called General's Walker and Almond (the X Corps Commander) back from Korea for a special "emergency council of war" in Tokyo. The purpose of the meeting was to study possible countermeasures to meet the Chinese intervention. MacArthur, realizing that he must save his forces, ordered Walker to make the necessary withdrawals to keep the Chinese forces from outflanking him. He directed Almond to maintain contact with the invaders but to gradually withdraw and consolidate his forces into the Hamhung-Hungnam area. General Almond pointed out that portions of his command (the 1st Marine Division and several battalions of the 7th Infantry Division) were cut off in the Changjin Reservoir area by the Chinese and that before he

U.S. Senate, Compilation of Certain Published Information on the Military Situation in the Far East, p. 137.

could withdraw he must do all he could to extricate these forces. MacArthur agreed with Almond's plan and told him to go ahead and then to do what he could to help relieve the pressure on the Eighth Army.³

The JCS, acting on MacArthur's message, approved his plans for assuming the defensive. They told him to put aside any previous directives that were in conflict with his current plan to defend. They pointed out to MacArthur that they were concerned about the wide separation between Eighth Army and X Corps and suggested that he close the gap and form a common defensive line across the front. MacArthur replied back that he did not agree. He believed that with the current positioning of the commands, the X Corps units "geographically threatened" the flank and the main supply routes of the enemy forces attacking the right flank of Eighth Army. He estimated that eight enemy divisions were being used to prevent the attack of the X Corps on the enemy's supply line and insisted that as long as X Corps stayed in position the Chinese would have difficulty penetrating to the south. What he apparently failed to realize was that the wide gap between his commands presented exposed flanks to the enemy which were much more vulnerable than those presented by the enemy. In his reply MacArthur also pointed out that closing the gap would be extremely difficult. He commented that:

³ Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XV-11 through XV-13.

Any concept of actual physical combination of the forces of the Eighth Army and X Corps in a practically continuous line across the narrow neck of Korea is quite impracticable due to the length of this line, the numerical weakness of our forces, and the logistic problems created by the mountainous divide which splits such a front from north to south.⁴

Several hours later MacArthur sent another message to the JCS in which he predicted that his forces would not be able to stop the advance of the Communist Chinese and that he would have to delay to the south. He also told the JCS that he was convinced the Chinese were planning to completely destroy the U.N. forces and secure the entire peninsula.⁵

THE ADMINISTRATION REACTS

On 28 November the worsening reports from Korea caused the President to call a special meeting of the NSC. The NSC discussed at length the situation in Korea. They were quite concerned about the dangers to MacArthur's command and discussed actions they could take to assist him. The possibility of the Communists using their air potential was discussed, specifically the planes based in Manchuria, but in spite of the dangers it was recommended that MacArthur still not be allowed to bomb the Manchurian airfields. The diplomatic implications of the situation were reviewed and it was agreed that, even though working through the United Nations presented some problems, it was essential to continue

⁴Ibid., pp. XV-13 and XV-14.

⁵Ibid., p. XV-15.

working within the framework of the international body. All members of the NSC were most emphatic that the United States, either with or without the United Nations, should not get involved in a general war with Communist China. It was generally conceded by the group that the Soviet Union was behind the intervention, but that any direct accusation of the Soviets in the United Nations would not be effective, and could possibly destroy the world body. They believed that the United States should be very cautious in its response and not give the Russians any excuse for directly entering the conflict. The NSC was also in accord that additional build-up of the United States military establishment was urgently required and that Congress should be requested to approve a supplementary budget to increase the military readiness posture of the United States.⁶

The NSC meeting was just the first of many meetings on the Korean situation held by different groups within the Executive branch and with Congressional leaders during the next several days. Much hard work was done to reevaluate plans and programs but no new definitive courses of action were approved or provided to General MacArthur.

MAC ARTHUR AND THE PRESS

During this same period MacArthur released a number of messages and interviews to the press.

⁶Ibid., pp. XV-27 through XV-29. See also Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, Vol. II, Years of Trial and Hope (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1956), pp. 385-88.

The Arthur Krock Exchange

The first of these was an exchange of messages between Arthur Krock (Columnist with the New York Times) and the General. Mr. Krock sent a message to MacArthur on the 29th asking if rumors in the United States were true that the general had refused to take the responsibility for the safety of his forces if he was not allowed to continue operations as planned. Krock went on to point out to MacArthur that some people implied:

. . . that this faced authorities with dilemma of taking risk replacing you with elections coming on or letting you proceed against their political and diplomatic judgment and against some high military judgments also.⁷

MacArthur immediately sent a message back saying that there was no truth whatsoever to the rumors. He stated that all phases of the operations in Korea had been fully coordinated and approved by the Administration prior to their execution. He added that in all actions he had always operated in compliance with the United Nations resolutions and the directives from the U. S. government. He ended the message by saying:

It is historically inaccurate to attribute any degree of responsibility for the onslaught of the Chinese Communist armies to the strategic course of the campaign itself. The decision by the Chinese Communist leaders to wage war against the United Nations could only have been a basic one, long premeditated and carried into execution as direct result of the defeat of their satellite North Korean armies. Thanks for bringing this misleading anonymous gossip to my attention.⁸

⁷U.S. Senate, Compilation of Certain Published Information on the Military Situation in the Far East, p. 137.

⁸Ibid., p. 138.

Both the inquiry and the reply were published in the New York Times on 1 December.

U.S. News and World Report Interview

On 1 December General MacArthur was interviewed by the editors of the U.S. News and World Report. The article was scheduled to be published in the 8 December 1950 issue of the magazine but was published earlier (on 2 December) in the New York Times.⁹

During the interview MacArthur was asked if there was adequate knowledge of Chinese strength. MacArthur was quite evasive in his answer and only stated that the distance between the front lines and the Manchurian border had grown so short that he couldn't detect troop movements. In his response he was also quick to point out that he was not allowed to conduct any reconnaissance north of the border. In response to a question about whether his plans were based on an estimate of not more than 60,000 Chinese in North Korea he answered that, "The tactical course taken was the only one which the situation permitted."

When asked if the Chinese supply lines were vulnerable to air attack, he completely reverse the stand he had taken with the JCS in October (when he assured the JCS that his Air Force could isolate the battle area), by answering:

⁹Ibid., pp. 174-75. Excerpts in this section are from this reference.

Within Manchuria the Chinese supply lines are protected from our air attack. South of the border for many miles along the river line, they can enter trails leading up through rugged terrain. Under the worst conditions, troops and supplies could be moved forward under cover of night with little possibility of air detection, an essential to air interdiction.

The next question specifically addressed restrictions on his actions. The editors asked, "are the limitations which prevent unlimited pursuit of Chinese large forces and unlimited attack on their bases regarded by you as a handicap to effective military operation?" In his response MacArthur again publicly complained about the restrictions placed upon him by the Administration and the United Nations. He replied, "An enormous handicap, without precedent in military history."

Towards the end of the interview MacArthur was asked the following question by the editors:

Public information here is that Chinese troops became visible October 19, but there is no official recognition here of that fact. Was official information concerning the buildup of Chinese troops transmitted here and to the U.N. during October?

By failing to mention his active role in convincing the Administration that the Chinese were only bluffing, MacArthur's response to the question gave the reader the impression that it was the Administration's fault that the intelligence regarding Chinese intentions was not properly evaluated. He evasively answered the question by saying, "Daily intelligence reports were submitted to Washington."

In light of the argument that was to follow between MacArthur and the Administration over the role of air and naval operations as well as the use of Chinese Nationalist

troops, the last item of the interview is quite interesting:

Q. The argument is being advanced here that war with China could be carried on by sea and air only and by giving moral and material support to Chinese guerrillas. Do you believe that such a war could be carried on successfully without substantial use of U.N. troops?

A. Modern warfare requires a combination and complete coordination of all three arms. I would not care to discuss the potentialities with respect to any particular area.

MacArthur's Message to Hugh Baillie

The last press release in question during this period was the message that General MacArthur sent to Mr. Hugh Baillie, President of the United Press, on 1 December 1950. This message was printed in the New York Times on 2 December 1950.¹⁰

MacArthur first explained how the supply lines "from behind the privileged sanctuary of neutral boundaries" to his front lines had gradually become shorter as his forces advanced north. He pointed out that this gave his Air Force less and less time to interdict the movement of people and equipment and that the front lines were so close now that it was impossible to stop the movement.

MacArthur then addressed the problem of the massive Chinese intervention. He took credit for discovering that there were so many Communist Chinese in North Korea by claiming that his late November attack revealed that the Chinese were "massing, under cover of concealment, of such a powerful force as to enable the complete destruction of the United

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 176-77. Excerpts in the remainder of the section are from this reference.

Nations Command and conquest of all Korea." He went on to say that "The premature exposure of the plan, while not denying the enemy some tactical success through force of numbers, although at staggering personnel loss, resulted in a partial strategic failure." MacArthur continued in the same vein by again complaining about the restrictions he was forced to operate under. He commented:

The existing situation under which the United Nations command is confronted with a new and fresh and well-trained and equipped enemy of vastly superior and ever-increasing numbers initiating an entirely new war to cover the North Korean defeat, results largely from the acceptance of military odds without precedent in history - the odds of permitting offensive action without defensive retaliation.

In the next portion of the message MacArthur explained that his command "cheerfully accepted" these odds:

. . . in the effort to uphold the high principles and standards which have characterized guiding policy and given nobility to the cause for which we fight, and to further the universal desire that the war be localized.

Indeed, throughout the war against the North Koreans we meticulously respected and held inviolate the international boundary and I at no time even recommended that authority be granted to retaliate beyond it.

After complimenting the men in the U.N. Command on the fine job they were doing, MacArthur turned his rhetoric to castigating the European press for the manner in which they were reporting the Korean conflict. He accused them of making "irresponsible comments" in their press and commented that they didn't understand the mission of the U.N. Command and therefore made false reports that he wasn't strictly adhering to the policies and directives of higher headquarters.

He felt that the European press was "somewhat selfish" in their attitude and didn't realize the importance of the Far East. He ended the message by again claiming that he had always followed the directives of higher headquarters and that:

It is historically inaccurate to attribute any degree of responsibility for the onslaught of the Chinese Communist armies to the strategic course of the campaign itself.

The decision by the Chinese Communist leaders to wage war against the United Nations could only have been a basic one, long premeditated and carried into execution as a direct result of the defeat of their satellite North Korean armies.

PUBLIC VERSUS PRIVATE DEBATE

General MacArthur's early December press releases incensed President Truman. Not only did he believe that MacArthur's statements were out of order, the President was firmly convinced that what MacArthur was saying, or alluding to, was wrong. He felt that MacArthur was trying to absolve himself of any blame for the near disaster then being experienced in the vicinity of the Yalu River. In addition, MacArthur's public statements caused many people abroad to question just what our government policy was with respect to Korea. In his Memoirs, President Truman stated:

I should have relieved General MacArthur then and there. The reason I did not was that I did not wish to have it appear as if he were being relieved because the offensive failed. I have never believed in going back on people when luck is against them, and I did not intend to do it now. Nor did I want to reprimand the

general, but he had to be told that the kinds of public statements which he had been making were out of order.¹¹

On 5 December, in an effort to muzzle MacArthur, the President forwarded a memo to all sections of the Executive Branch in which he directed them as follows:

In the light of the present critical international situation, and until further written notice from me, I wish that each one of you would take immediate steps to reduce the number of public speeches pertaining to foreign or military policy made by officials of the departments and agencies of the Executive Branch. This applies to officials in the field as well as those in Washington.

No speech, press release, or other public statement concerning foreign policy should be released until it has received clearance from the Department of State.

No speech, press release, or other statement concerning military policy should be released until it has received clearance from the Department of Defense.

In addition to the copies submitted to the Departments of State or Defense for clearance, advance copies of speeches and press releases concerning foreign policy or military policy should be submitted to the White House for information.

The purpose of this memorandum is not to curtail the flow of information to the American people, but rather to insure that the information made public is accurate and fully in accord with the policies of the United States Government.¹²

¹¹Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 384. Earlier in the book Truman had commented, "Now, no one is blaming General MacArthur, and certainly I never did, for the failure of the November offensive. He is no more to be blamed for the fact that he was outnumbered than General Eisenhower could be charged with the heavy losses of the Battle of the Bulge. But - and herein lies the difference between the Eisenhower of 1944 and MacArthur of 1950 - I do blame General MacArthur for the manner in which he tried to excuse his failure. Ibid., pp. 381-82.

¹²Guttman, Korea and the Theory of Limited War, p. 10.

On the same date he sent additional instructions to the Secretaries of State and Defense as follows:

In addition to the policy expressed in my memorandum of this date to the heads of the departments, concerning the clearance of speeches and statements, I wish the following steps be taken:

Officials overseas, including military commanders and diplomatic representatives, should be ordered to exercise extreme caution in public statements, to clear all but routine statements with their departments, and to refrain from direct communication on military or foreign policy with newspapers, magazines or other publicity media in the United States.¹³

On 6 December, both of the above messages were sent to General MacArthur, by the JCS, stating that they were "transmitted to you for guidance and appropriate action."¹⁴ General Marshall was to testify at the Senate Hearings after MacArthur's relief that, "Now the directive of December 6 was put into general terms in order to avoid making it specifically personal to General MacArthur."¹⁵

CHINESE NATIONALIST SUPPORT?

On 28 November General MacArthur sent a message to the JCS reminding them of the Chiang Kai-shek offer of the previous summer to send 33,000 troops to fight in South Korea. On the advice of both the JCS and General MacArthur, the original offer had been turned down. Two of the reasons

¹³Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁵U.S. Senate, Military Situation in the Far East, p. 342.

for refusing the initial offer in July were the belief that acceptance might prompt (or excuse) Communist Chinese intervention and that Nationalist forces could better be used to defend Formosa. MacArthur argued that these premises were no longer valid and that the offer should now be accepted. He pointed out that the Nationalist troops were the only source of replacements available to him for early commitment against the Communist Chinese. He estimated that the troops could be available within two weeks and probably in greater force than the promised 33,000 troops. He then urgently recommended to the JCS:

. . . that the theater commander be authorized to negotiate directly with the Chinese Government authorities on Formosa for the movement north and incorporation in the United Nations Command of such Chinese units as may be available and desirable for reinforcing our position in Korea.¹⁶

The Administration did not share the views of General MacArthur on the use of Chinese Nationalist troops in Korea. They believed it might enlarge the area of conflict and possibly involve the United States in World War III. From previous discussions with her Allies, the United States was also aware that this course of action would not be acceptable to many of the other nations participating in the U.N. Command. In addition, from a purely military point of

¹⁶Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. XVI-4. See also MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 375 and Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 384-85.

view, the JCS felt it would be very difficult to equip the Nationalist troops and doubted, in any event, whether the troops "would decisively influence the situation in Korea." The JCS believed that, in case of general war, the Nationalist forces would be of more value for use on the mainland than in Korea. After a long discussion with the State Department, the Defense Department, and the JCS, the President directed the JCS to point out to MacArthur the "international implication" of his recommendation. The JCS did not provide MacArthur an immediate answer but rather only told him that his proposal was being considered and pointing out some of the possibilities being discussed. The 29 November JCS reply to MacArthur's proposal read:

Your proposal is being considered. It involves worldwide consequences. We shall have to consider the possibility that it would disrupt the united position of the nations associated with us in the United Nations, and have us isolated. It may be wholly unacceptable to the commonwealth countries to have their forces employed with Nationalist Chinese. It might extend hostilities to Formosa and other areas. Incidentally, our position of leadership in the Far East is being most seriously compromised in the United Nations. The utmost care will be necessary to avoid the disruption of the essential Allied line-up in that organization.¹⁷

BRITISH CONCERN

The British, like the majority of the other NATO nations, were quite concerned with rumors that MacArthur

¹⁷Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 385. See also Scamabel, Policy and Direction, p. XVI-5.

wanted to take sterner measures against Communist China. They did not want to see the Korean War widen in scope because of the possible effects on the fledgling NATO Alliance. Our Allies in Europe were well aware of what would happen to the Alliance if the United States got embroiled in a major war in China, and MacArthur's public statements made them very nervous. In addition to MacArthur's statements, the President had, during a press conference on 30 November, made a statement about the use of the atomic bomb being under consideration for use in Korea, which also alarmed the British. The President was quick to point out publicly that he alone could authorize the use of the atomic bomb and that he did not plan to use it in Korea, but many people interpreted the President's remarks to mean he had threatened to use the bomb in Korea. As a result the British requested a Washington meeting for the first week in December with President Truman to discuss their fears.

During a series of six meetings from 4 to 8 December, Prime Minister Attlee and President Truman, along with their primary advisors, discussed world problems in general and the Korean situation in detail. The talks were successful in that each country frankly talked about the policy and programs of the other and any fears concerning them. Naturally there was no complete accord between the two nations but they did agree on the basic issues and the broad courses of action to follow. At the completion of the meetings the two men issued a joint statement. In the statement they reaffirmed

their agreement on basic foreign policies and aims. After examining the world situation in detail they stated they recognized adequate defense forces were essential if war was to be avoided and concluded that the two countries should improve their military stature as quickly as possible. In line with the above they announced they would both expand their production of arms and make them available for the remainder of the Allies for use in common defense.¹⁸

GENERAL COLLINS VISITS JAPAN AGAIN

In early December General Collins flew again to Japan and Korea with two main purposes in mind: to talk with MacArthur, Walker and Almond to get a firsthand report on the fighting and to get their opinion on the chances of successfully defending against the Chinese Communists; and secondly, to get MacArthur's opinion on a cease-fire, if one could be arranged.

After talking with Walker and Almond, General Collins did not believe the situation in Korea was as critical as it seemed. It was true that the Eighth Army and the X Corps were being pushed back, but both commanders were confident that they could conduct an effective delay and that a beach-head could be held in Korea with the forces currently assigned.

¹⁸U.S. Senate, Compilation of Certain Published Information on the Military Situation in the Far East, pp. 143-146. See also Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XV-29 through XV-44 and Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, Chap. 25.

Upon his return to Tokyo, Collins conferred with General MacArthur and his staff. MacArthur structured the discussion utilizing three different sets of assumptions, the first two involving continued all-out attack by the Chinese and the last one being based on the Chinese agreeing not to advance below the 38th parallel.

The first set of assumptions included: (1) that current restrictions on air operations and reconnaissance north of the Yalu would continue; (2) there would be no naval blockade of China; (3) that there would be no immediate reinforcement of the U.N. forces (to include Chinese Nationalists) until April 1951; and (4) no use of the atomic bomb in North Korea. General MacArthur stated that if the current restrictions on his operations were continued, it was tantamount to surrender of Korea to the Chinese Communists. He did not believe his forces could maintain a presence in Korea without immediate substantial reinforcements and if they were not going to be provided, the movement of the United Nations Command out of Korea should be considered. MacArthur stated that for this set of assumptions that an armistice would not be essential from a military point of view but might be helpful from a political point of view.

The second set of assumptions included: (1) an effective naval blockade of China would be initiated; (2) air reconnaissance and offensive operation over mainland China would be authorized; (3) Chinese Nationalist forces would be utilized to the maximum; and (4) the atomic bomb might

be used if "tactically appropriate." MacArthur advocated adoption of the assumptions in this second case and requested Collins to discuss them in Washington.

In the third case, the assumption that the Chinese would agree not to cross the 38th parallel, MacArthur felt the United Nations should seek an armistice.

When Collins returned to Washington and briefed the President on his trip, Truman was disturbed to find General MacArthur's views and his own were still far apart. As the President commented in his Memoirs, ". . . I was left with just one simple conclusion: General MacArthur was ready to risk general war. I was not."¹⁹

MOBILIZATION PLANS

MacArthur's request for immediate replacements and reinforcements to stem the full-scale intervention of the Communist Chinese, forced the Administration to review their mobilization plans. The absence of any major tactical units to send to MacArthur until the following summer made the Defense Department realize that its buildup was not extensive nor fast enough to meet the emergency situation. Therefore during the first few weeks in December, actions were taken to both speed up and widen the expansion of the military establishment. As a result the Army called up two more

¹⁹Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 414-16. See also Collins, War in Peacetime, pp. 229-33 and Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XV-20 through XV-24.

National Guard Divisions and the President declared a state of national emergency.

WITHDRAWAL

In early December MacArthur formulated his plans for the defense of Korea under the pressure of the Chinese intervention. In general it called for an evacuation of the X Corps from Hungnam to Pusan by sea and air, and a withdrawal, in successive positions, by the Eighth Army back to Seoul, and if necessary, to the Pusan area. The JCS quickly approved MacArthur's plans. The evacuation of the X Corps started on 12 December, and by 24 December General Almond had successfully completed the operation. MacArthur called the evacuation from Hungnam a "classic" and praised Almond for his skillful handling of the operation.

Meanwhile the Eighth Army started withdrawing southward through planned withdrawal lines. At this time Chinese pressure was not forcing the rearward displacements. In fact, as the Eighth Army moved back to establish a continuous defensive line across the peninsula at a more advantageous area, they were puzzled why the enemy wasn't maintaining aggressive contact with the U.N. forces. On the 19th of December, General MacArthur instructed Walker to conduct extensive ground reconnaissance to a considerable depth forward of the U.N. lines to determine what was going on and also to determine what units were there, in what strengths,

and their probable intentions. On 23 December, in the course of checking on these actions, General Walker died in a jeep accident north of Seoul near Uijongbu.

RIDGWAY TAKES EIGHTH ARMY

As had been agreed upon between General Collins and General MacArthur, the replacement for Walker, if anything happened to him, was to be Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway, then assigned as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Administration at Department of the Army. Ridgway had had considerable command experience in combat, having been both a division and a corps commander in World War II. His duties on the Army Staff had kept him in close contact with the Korean situation and he was able to take command rapidly and with a minimum of problems. Ridgway stopped in Tokyo for a briefing from MacArthur prior to flying into Korea. Ridgway found MacArthur somewhat discouraged by the events in Korea. MacArthur gave Ridgway his complete confidence and when Ridgway asked MacArthur what authority he (Ridgway) had in directing operations in Korea, to include a possible attack, MacArthur answered, "The Eighth Army is yours, Matt."²⁰

General Ridgway enjoyed much more freedom of action than General Walker had had. Walker had been kept under the close supervision of the GHQ but MacArthur gave Ridgway carte

²⁰ Matthew B. Ridgway, The Korean War (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1967), p. 83.

blanche to employ the Eighth Army the best way he saw fit.²¹ Ridgway had intended to go on the offensive as soon as possible but soon found out that his new command was not "offensive minded" and decided to delay his attack plans for awhile. He did, however, start his staff to formulating plans for an offensive.

In view of the serious situation which faced the U.N. Command, the South Koreans were fearful that the Eighth Army might evacuate Korea. One of the first acts that General Ridgway did, upon arriving in Korea, was to pay a courtesy call on President Rhee in Seoul. During the visit he assured Rhee that he had no intentions of leaving Korea and that as soon as possible he planned to go on the offensive. Ridgway then turned his efforts to forcing the Eighth Army to adopt an offensive attitude and to look to the front. The enemy though, didn't plan to wait for the Eighth Army to assume this new posture, and on New Years Eve launched a general offensive south of the 38th parallel. It was clear to Ridgway that the Chinese offensive was aimed at capturing Seoul and Inchon, and was just the beginning of a general attack to force the Eighth Army from Korea by the sheer force of the size of the Chinese forces. The Eighth Army was forced to delay back under pressure of the Chinese attack, and on 3 January had to abandon hope of retaining Seoul and fell back South of the Han River. Ridgway was determined to inflict the maximum punishment on the Chinese forces during

²¹Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. XVI-26.

this delay and severely chastised his Corps commanders when their units failed to maintain pressure on the enemy as they fell back. By mid-January the Eighth Army had pretty well halted the Chinese attack along a general defensive line extending from Pyongtaek on the west to Samchek on the east. The staunch defense by the Eighth Army (the X Corps now belonged to General Ridgway), the extremely cold weather, and the increasing supply difficulties of the Chinese army soon brought a complete halt to the communist offensive, and by the end of January the Eighth Army had switched to the offensive.

WHAT IS MAC ARTHUR'S MISSION IN KOREA?

Other than approving MacArthur's plans to assume a defensive posture in late November, and to approve his plans for the evacuation of the X Corps to Pusan and the withdrawal/delay of the Eighth Army in early December, the JCS had not provided General MacArthur with any change in his basic mission. In mid-December MacArthur had asked for additional troops by requesting that the four activated National Guard divisions training in the States be sent to Japan to complete their training, but the JCS had answered that this was almost impossible. On 30 December the JCS informed MacArthur that he would not receive any more American divisions nor would he receive any significant reinforcements from the other member nations of the United Nations at this time. In this same message the JCS told

MacArthur that it appeared that the communists had the capability of forcing the U.N. forces out of Korea if they chose to do so. They said that the forced evacuation could be averted if "substantial additional" American forces were introduced into Korea, or if the current forces in Korea made the "effort so costly to the enemy that they would abandon it." In that the Administration had already decided not to introduce additional American units into Korea because they did not believe that Korea was the place to fight a major war, and that the commitment of additional forces would seriously deplete their reserves in the face of an increased threat of a general war, the JCS pointed out to MacArthur that:

. . . a successful resistance to Chinese-North Korean aggression at some position in Korea and a deflation of the military and political prestige of the Chinese Communists would be of great importance to our national interest, if they could be accomplished without incurring serious losses.²²

The JCS were well aware that what they were asking MacArthur to do would be extremely difficult and risky. They went on to tell him that his basic directive required modification because of the current events in Korea and they thereby directed him, "you are now directed to defend in successive positions, subject to the primary consideration of the continued threat to Japan, and to determine in advance our last reasonable opportunity for an orderly evacuation." The

²²MacArthur, Reminiscences, pp. 377-78.

JCS pointed out that they imagined this would be in the vicinity of the Kum River and eastward, and that if the communists were to amass such a force that seemed capable of forcing him out of Korea that they would direct him to "commence a withdrawal to Japan." The JCS ended the message by asking MacArthur:

. . . your views are requested as to the above outlined conditions which should determine a decision to initiate evacuation, particularly in the light of your continuing primary mission of defense of Japan, for which only the troops of Eighth Army are available.²³

MacArthur replied that he did not feel it was necessary to make the decision for evacuation now but to wait until his forces were actually forced back to the "beachhead line." The JCS, after determining what MacArthur meant by "beachhead line," directed MacArthur that if the enemy reached the so-called "Davidson Line" (an arc roughly 30 miles north of Pusan) that "the time for final decision would have arrived" and he would order the evacuation of his command.²⁴

EVACUATION PLANS

Rumors soon spread that the United States was considering a withdrawal from Korea. Apprehension became so acute among the officers and men of the Republic of Korea Army in early January that Ridgway asked MacArthur to make a public statement to allay the fears of the Republic of Korea

²³ Ibid., p. 378.

²⁴ J. Lawton Collins, War in Peacetime (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1969), p. 247. See also Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. XVI-33.

soldiers. MacArthur declined to make the statement but passed it on to the JCS with the comment that the suggestion was a good idea but it was impossible to do "until the basis for such a statement is established by policy determination at governmental level."²⁵ MacArthur started the development of plans for the evacuation of Korea, to include provisions for evacuation of the Republic of Korea Government, Republic of Korea Army, and Republic of Korea police forces, but the planning was never completed due to the stopping of the Chinese offensive by the Eighth Army in the latter half of January.

A side issue during this same period was a message from the JCS on 4 January 1951 asking for MacArthur's comments on a proposal to organize (to include equipping with light infantry weapons) additional South Korean units. They specifically wanted recommendations on the possible use of these units and comments on the time it would take to organize and train the personnel plus any other problems he could foresee. MacArthur replied that with the type and quantity of weapons mentioned by the JCS that the overall interests of the United States might better be served by making the weapons available to the National Police Reserve of Japan rather than arming additional South Koreans. He cited as reasons for the recommendation the lack of leadership

²⁵ Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. XVI-34.

available in South Korea and the ineffectiveness of non-Army Republic of Korea forces.²⁶

MAC ARTHUR RECOMMENDS POLICY²⁷

On 30 December, in addition to giving the JCS his opinions on the evacuation of Korea, General MacArthur also sent a long message to the JCS on actions the United States could adopt in Korea. Essentially they were the same ones he had advocated to General Collins when the Army Chief of Staff had visited him in Tokyo in early December, i.e., (1) naval blockade of the coast of China; (2) naval and air bombardment of the Chinese mainland; (3) use of Chinese Nationalist forces in Korea; and (4) a new one, allow Chiang to utilize his forces for any actions the Generalissimo saw fit, to include diversionary attacks on mainland China. Mac Arthur believed the United States had lost its "will to win" in Korea and was quite concerned about the restrictions on the use of the total force available to him. He believed that the adoption of the above actions would "largely neutralize China's capability to wage aggressive war" and

²⁶Ibid., pp. XVI-37 through XVI-40. See also U.S. Senate, Compilation of Certain Published Information on the Military Situation in the Far East, pp. 173-74.

²⁷Unless otherwise specified the references for this section are MacArthur, Reminiscences, pp. 378-82 and Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XVII-1 through XVII-23.

relieve the pressure on his forces in Korea. He stated that nothing he advocated "would further aggravate the situation as far as China is concerned." As to the Soviet intervention in the event of the adoption of his recommendations he commented:

Whether defending ourselves by way of military retaliation would bring in Soviet military intervention or not is a matter of speculation. I have always felt that a Soviet decision to precipitate a general war would depend solely upon its own estimate of relative strengths and capabilities with little regard to other factors.

MacArthur also pointed out in the message that if we allowed the Chinese to take Korea without attacking the Chinese mainland we would lose face in the Far East and would probably require a subsequent increase in forces to protect our vital interests in the Far East. He also commented that if we evacuated Korea this would free a large number of Chinese Communists to attack other areas. MacArthur then brought up the impact of his suggestions on European security. He pointed out that while he believed fully in the defense of Europe, it was not to the point of accepting defeat anywhere else, i.e., Korea. He commented that the use of additional force in Korea ". . . would insure thoroughly seasoned forces for later commitment in Europe synchronously with Europe's own development of military resources." He ended the message by repeating his earlier comment, that under the current ground rules (i.e., restrictions) he agreed with the JCS estimate that the U.N. Command faced forced evacuation from Korea.

ADMINISTRATION ANALYSIS OF
MAC ARTHUR'S SUGGESTIONS

The Administration realized that the recommendations that MacArthur had made could be construed as acts of war. The United Nations were fighting the Communist Chinese in Korea but neither had officially declared war on the other. The fighting had been limited to Korea by both the communists and the United Nations. It soon became evident to the Administration, through conversations with its allies and other members of the United Nations, that the other members of the United Nations would be very reluctant to go to war with China. The President did have the option of unilaterally approving MacArthur's recommendations but he could only do so with U.S. forces and these actions would in reality put the United States at war with the Chinese, something the Administration wished to avoid. The Administration believed that a general war with Communist China would probably involve the Russians, due to their mutual defense pact with China, and would likely lead to World War III. The Administration therefore wished to continue the Korean conflict as a United Nations action, and limited to the Korean peninsula. In their analysis of MacArthur's suggestions the Administrator kept these aims uppermost in their minds.

Naval Blockade of China

The United States had imposed an economic embargo on Communist China in early December, but these sanctions were never particularly effective due to the non-observance of the embargo by other nations. On the other hand, a naval blockade, such as MacArthur had recommended, could be a very effective instrument of pressure against China. However, to be effective the blockade would have to be applied against the ships of all nations, and would have to include the blockade of such ports as the British port of Hong Kong, and the Russian controlled ports of Darien and Port Arthur. The JCS believed that only a United Nations sponsored blockade would have any chance of success. They believed that a unilateral United States blockade of China not only "would 'leak like a sieve' but that the dangers of alienating the British and of getting into a shooting war with the Russians were too great to accept."²⁸ The Administration was not ready to accept the possible political results of a direct confrontation with Russia and separation from its allies which was inherent in a United States blockade of mainland China. They also did not want to advance the impression that this was going to be a U.S. war rather than a United Nations action.

Use of Nationalist Chinese Troops

At the outbreak of the Korean War the Administration had adopted a policy of neutralization of Formosa and the

²⁸Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XVII-8 and XVII-9.

Seventh Fleet was patrolling the Formosan Straits to keep the communists from attacking Formosa, and Chiang from attacking the mainland. Repeated attempts by MacArthur to be authorized to use Nationalist Chinese troops in Korea had been turned down by Washington due to political considerations and a belief that the Nationalist troops would not be very effective in operations in Korea. To use Nationalist Chinese troops in Korea, or to allow them to make raids against the mainland, would mean a revision of U.S. policy towards the Formosan Government and an acceptance of an alliance with Nationalist China similar to the World War II understanding. This would cause much hard feelings with many of our allies and would more than likely make it much more difficult to make any political settlement with the North Koreans or Communist Chinese in Korea. After carefully studying the possibility of allowing Chiang to conduct operations against mainland China it was concluded by the JCS that Chiang did not have the men and equipment to mount any sort of a significant attack against the Chinese mainland. Only with the support of U.S. equipment and transportation did the JCS envision that Nationalist China have any hopes of conducting successful operations. Even if the United States decided to divert resources from other vital areas to support these operations it would take considerable time and would seriously effect the support of the U.N. Command in Korea. The paramount reason for not adopting the use of Nationalist Chinese troops against mainland China or in Korea, however, remained political.

Aerial and Naval Bombardment of China

The JCS felt that any attack of the Chinese mainland was likely to escalate the war and probably lead to a full-scale war. As stated earlier the other members of the United Nations were not amenable to extending the war to mainland China. This would mean it would be a United States "act of war" and could very well bring even greater response from Communist China and Russia. They also believed that any air or naval bombardment of mainland China would invite possible retaliation against our bases in Japan. For these reasons the Administration would not approve the offensive actions to be taken against the mainland of China.

THE ADMINISTRATION SAYS NO

On 9 January the JCS sent General MacArthur an interim denial of his proposals:

The retaliatory measures you suggest have been and continue to be given careful consideration. There is little possibility of policy change or other eventuality justifying strengthening of our effort in Korea. Blockade of China coast, if undertaken, must await either stabilization of our position in Korea or our evacuation from Korea. However, a naval blockade off the coast of China would require negotiations with the British in view of the extent of British trade with China through Hong Kong. Naval and air attacks on objectives in Communist China probably can be authorized only if the Chinese Communists attack United States forces outside of Korea and decision must await that eventuality. Favorable action cannot be taken on the proposal to obtain Korean reinforcements from the Chinese Nationalist garrison on Formosa, in view of the improbability of their decisive effect on the Korean outcome and their probable greater usefulness elsewhere.

In the light of the foregoing and after full consideration of all pertinent factors, defense in successive

positions as required by the Joint Chiefs of Staff's message, inflicting maximum damage to hostile forces in Korea, subject to primary consideration of the safety of your troops and your basic mission of protecting Japan. Should it become evident in your judgement that evacuation is essential to avoid severe losses of men and materiel you will at that time withdraw from Korea to Japan.²⁹

MacArthur responded with another message the next day in which he protested that the JCS had given him two incompatible directives which he could not carry out at the same time. He pointed out that his original mission in Korea did not include fighting the Communist Chinese, and that his current forces were not adequate to hold a position in Korea. His troops could hold a beachhead line in Korea for a limited time but it would involve losses and he could not say whether the losses could be termed severe or not. He cited the unfavorable publicity given the withdrawal of the Eighth Army and protested:

The troops are tired from a long and difficult campaign, embittered by the shameful propaganda which has falsely condemned their courage and fighting qualities in the misunderstood retrograde maneuver, and their morale will become a serious threat to their battle efficiency unless the political basis upon which they are asked to trade life for time is clearly delineated, fully understood and so impelling that the hazards of battle are cheerfully accepted.³⁰

He again strongly stated that under the current restrictions with which he was forced to operate, his forces would not be able to hold Korea for long and recommended that, unless there were overriding political considerations, his troops should be

²⁹ MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 380.

³⁰ Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XVII-17 and XVII-18.

evacuated from Korea as soon as it was tactically possible. He protested that the decision to evacuate was strictly a political one and outside the purview of a theater commander. He stated the United States should make up its mind as to what the purpose of the troops in Korea was, and if their presence in Korea was essential, that the United States should accept the risk of high casualties and the risk to the security of Japan. MacArthur complained that his current directives gave the enemy the initiative for the decision for evacuating his forces from Korea and asked the JCS if the objective of U.S. policy in Korea was to maintain a military presence indefinitely or for a limited time, or to minimize losses by evacuation, as soon as possible. He concluded his message by commenting:

As I have pointed out before, under the extraordinary limitations and conditions imposed upon the command in Korea, its military position is untenable, but it can hold for any length of time, up to its complete destruction, if overriding political considerations so dictate.³¹

The JCS reply to MacArthur did not change the Far East commander's objectives. They told MacArthur that they were quite aware that the U.N. Command could not hold off a determined Chinese attack for a long period of time but wanted him to stay there as long as possible and kill as many of the enemy as possible before evacuating his troops to Japan. The JCS informed MacArthur it was in the national interest to stay in Korea for as long as possible to gain time for further

³¹Ibid., p. XVII-19.

diplomatic and military talks with the allies and other members of the United Nations. The Joint Chiefs went on to say:

It is important also to the United States prestige worldwide to the future of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and to efforts to organize anti-communist resistance in Asia that Korea not be evacuated unless actually forced by military considerations, and that maximum practicable punishment be inflicted on Communist aggressors.³²

The JCS did ask MacArthur for his estimate "as to timing and conditions under which you will have to issue instructions to evacuate Korea,"³³ but stated the directives would remain in effect for the time being.

General MacArthur's 10 January message was shown to the President who became deeply disturbed. The President felt that MacArthur was in effect telling them that the course of action adopted by the JCS and the NSC, and approved by him "was not feasible."³⁴ The President, in his Memoirs, pointed out that though this assessment from MacArthur was to prove wrong, that the questioning of the decision, and the request for reconsideration were proper. The NSC was called together to reconsider the policy, and after reaffirming the policy, recommended that the President send a personal message to MacArthur explaining this decision and bringing him up to date on U.S. foreign policy. The President also told all concerned to keep MacArthur posted on all actions pertaining to him.³⁵

³²Ibid., p. XVII-20.

³³Ibid., p. XVII-20.

³⁴Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 434.

³⁵Ibid., p. 435.

The President went on to say that the purpose of the message was:

General MacArthur had, as he had in previous wars, displayed splendid leadership. But I wanted him to accept, as a soldier should, the political decisions which the civil authorities had determined upon.³⁶

The President's message to MacArthur³⁷ started out by explaining that the Administration was deeply concerned with the situation in Korea and was earnestly seeking ways of solving the situation. The President then gave his views as to why it was important to continue to resist aggression in Korea. He was careful to point out that his message was not directive in nature, but an attempt to let MacArthur know "what is in our minds regarding the political factors." The President then listed ten reasons why it was important to conduct a successful resistance in Korea. The reasons included: to show that the United States and the United Nations would not allow overt aggression to go unopposed; to show that Communist China's political and military prestige were over-rated; to buy time to provide assistance to other countries who were susceptible to aggression; to honor our treaty commitments; to enhance the viability of the forthcoming Japanese peace treaty; to lend resolution or inspire those who are living under the shadow of the communist powers and those who might be called on to protect their countries from the

³⁶Ibid., p. 436.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 435-36. The complete message is printed on these two pages. All quotes from the message are from this source.

communists; to add urgency to the rapid buildup of the western world; and to show that collective security is a viable deterrent to aggression.

The President then pointed out that any course of action selected by the United States should consolidate, not fragment, the United Nations. He believed the United States should act with prudence and keep the conflict limited in both scope and area. He told MacArthur that he was quite aware that the defense of Korea might prove to be militarily impossible with the forces available but strongly believed that we should resist the aggression as long as possible without sacrificing the troops of the U.N. Command. The President further stated that the government was giving "constant thought to the main threat from the Soviet Union and to the need for a rapid expansion of our armed forces to meet this great danger." He cautioned MacArthur that even though he believed "the free world is getting a much clearer and realistic picture of the dangers before us" that the United Nations was still confused and prone to "wishful thinking" and were not inclined to take any actions to expand the war until "all possible avenues to peaceful settlement have been fully explored." The President ended the message with the following compliment, "The entire nation is grateful for your splendid leadership in the difficult struggle in Korea and for the superb performance of your forces under the most difficult circumstances."

MacArthur's response to the message, as stated in his Reminiscences was:

I replied at once: "We will do our best," and I told my staff: "That, gentlemen, finally settles the question of whether or not we evacuate Korea. There will be no evacuation."³⁸

VANDENBERG AND COLLINS VISIT

MAC ARTHUR AGAIN

As part of the same effort to insure that MacArthur understood the new directive, the Chiefs of Staff of the Air Force and the Army were sent to the Far East in mid-January for discussions with MacArthur. The first conference was held on the 15th in Tokyo and MacArthur explained to the visitors that the confusion over the new directive was because originally it was not clear to him as to how long he was to stay in Korea, and under what conditions he should evacuate the country. He also was concerned that the new directives hadn't clearly spelled out his responsibilities in defending Japan. He hastened to add though, that, as a result of the President's message of the 12th, he no longer had any doubts as to his mission or responsibilities and that he interpreted the President's message as a directive to remain in Korea indefinitely.³⁹

General Collins was quick to remind General MacArthur that the President's message was not directive in nature and

³⁸ MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 382.

³⁹ Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XVII-24 and XVII-25.

had so indicated. He did, however, state that the President had told him just before he left that it was agreed that the decision to evacuate Korea should be delayed as long as possible, without endangering the U.N. forces in Korea or Japan, to inflict the maximum casualties on the enemy and to allow time for further political action by the United Nations.⁴⁰

The question of the defense of Japan then came up and Collins commented that even if it was decided that reinforcements would be sent to Japan, it would be a minimum of six weeks before they could arrive, and that for the time being there would be no change in MacArthur's mission. MacArthur protested that because of the Russian capability of attacking Japan and that his forces were required to hold a line in Korea, that his command as presently constituted, should not be held responsible for the defense of Japan. He again recommended that the four activated National Guard divisions be sent to Japan, stating that it was what they had been activated for. Collins answered that MacArthur had been advised before that the divisions were not activated for this purpose and would not make any commitments on sending the units to Japan.

Collins and Vandenberg then flew to Korea for two days of visits with General Ridgway's command. On the 15th Ridgway had recommended offensive operations in Korea with

⁴⁰Ibid., p. XVII-24.

Operation WOLFHOOUND. The two visitors were most impressed with the progress the Eighth Army was making and sent back very encouraging reports to Washington. Collins and Vandenberg had another discussion with MacArthur upon their return to Tokyo on the 17th and all three agreed that the situation was much better and that the U.N. forces could maintain a beachhead in Korea indefinitely.

THE 12 JANUARY MEMORANDUM

One other subject was discussed with MacArthur during Collins and Vandenberg's visit to Tokyo. This was the results of some studies made by the JCS in December and early January for use by the NSC to develop courses of action which could be used in Korea if the situation got much worse. At first reading three of the JCS recommendations⁴¹ to the NSC seemed the same as what General MacArthur had recommended in late December, but the qualifications, and the timing of, the actions were entirely different. The recommendations were never approved by the NSC or the President and, as a result of the favorable turn of events in Korea, were discarded.⁴² General MacArthur was to use this memorandum during the Senate hearings as proof that the JCS had agreed with him on the recommendations to expand the war to China. The Defense Department and the JCS testified that General MacArthur must have missed, or forgotten, the qualifying statements in the

⁴¹The JCS did not recommend the use of Nationalist Chinese troops in Korea. Ibid., p. XVII-31.

⁴²Ibid., p. XVII-33.

message, and the fact that this was a study, not a directive. The JCS maintained that they had only recommended that these actions be taken if certain eventualities and conditions were experienced. In any event, a policy statement from the Administration had been received by General MacArthur stating that his recommendations had been disapproved as discussed earlier in this chapter.

CHAPTER IX

THE RELIEF OF GENERAL MAC ARTHUR

THE U.N. REGAINS THE OFFENSIVE

The success of Operation WOLFHOUND in mid-January was soon followed with a general offensive by the Eighth Army. By the end of February the Eighth Army had completely regained the initiative and was making steady progress to the north and by the end of March they had driven the communists back behind the 38th parallel. Most of the credit for the renewed offensive spirit in the Eighth Army must be given to General Ridgway. He had taken over a demoralized Army in December, and even with the early January setbacks, had succeeded in forcing the Eighth Army to turn its face to the front and to start thinking in offensive terms.¹

¹It therefore rankled Ridgway somewhat when MacArthur took credit for one of the larger offensive operations, Operation KILLER, which was a wholly Eighth Army conceived and executed operation. General Ridgway had personally devised the plan and had taken the American newsmen in Korea into his confidence but had extracted a promise from them not to disclose the story until after the attack was underway. The day prior to the kickoff of the operation MacArthur flew into Korea, and during a press conference made the following announcement, "I have just ordered a resumption of the offensive," not only prematurely disclosing the operation to the enemy, but taking overall credit for the operation. James F. Schnabel, Policy and Direction: The First Year, U.S. Army in the Korean War (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, forthcoming), p. XVIII-18. See also Matthew B. Ridgway, The Korean War (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1967), pp. 108-09.

TRUCE ATTEMPTS

The United States and its allies in the United Nations had attempted to arrange a cease-fire in Korea during December and January, to include the sponsoring of a resolution to establish a U.N. Cease Fire Group. The General Assembly passed the resolution but the complete lack of cooperation on the part of the North Koreans and the Communist Chinese doomed it to failure. On 1 February the U.N. General Assembly, over the objections of the Communist Bloc and hesitancy on the part of some other member nations, passed a resolution naming the People's Republic of China an aggressor nation in Korea, and called for the achievement of the United Nations objectives in Korea by peaceful means.²

RASHIN AND THE HYDROELECTRIC PLANTS

Another attempt was made by the Far East Command in mid-February to get permission to bomb Rashin (a North Korean port about 19 miles from the Russian border) and the hydroelectric plants on the Yalu. Rashin had been taken off the target list in September due to its closeness to Russia, and the hydroelectric plants had been denied as targets in December. Though members of the Army General Staff recommended approval of the bombing of Rashin the JCS did not believe the port was as militarily important as MacArthur had portrayed it.

²Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XVIII-5 and XVIII-6.

The JCS and the State Department also did not feel it was worth the political repercussions which could occur. Again the JCS refused permission to bomb Rashin. For much the same reasons the request to bomb the hydroelectric plants was turned down.³

THE GENERAL TALKS AGAIN TO THE PRESS

Though General MacArthur had assured General Collins during his visit in January that he understood his mission and responsibilities in Korea it was very evident he still did not agree with the restrictions he had been directed to observe. In an article printed on 14 February 1951 in the New York Times he again voiced his displeasure with the operations in Korea. After warning the readers not to be too optimistic about the combat successes in Korea he stated:

The concept advanced by some that we should establish a line across Korea and enter into positional warfare is wholly unrealistic and illusory. It fails completely to take into account the length of such a line at the narrowest lateral, the rugged terrain which is involved and the relatively small force which could be committed to the purpose. The attempt to engage in such strategy would insure destruction of our forces piecemeal. Talk of crossing the Thirty-eighth Parallel at the present stage of the campaign, except by scattered patrol action incidental to the tactical situation, is purely academic.

From a military standpoint we must materially reduce the existing superiority of our Chinese Communist enemy engaging with impunity in undeclared war against us, with the unprecedented military advantage of sanctuary protection for his military potential against our counterattack upon Chinese soil, before we can seriously consider conducting major operations north of that geographic line.⁴

³Ibid., pp. XVIII-30 through XVIII-36.

⁴U.S. Senate, Compilation of Main Published Information on the Military Situation in the Far East, p. 181.

On 8 March a similar statement was also printed in the New York Times. In this article MacArthur, after giving his appraisal of the operations in Korea, ended his statement by commenting:

Vital decisions have yet to be made - decisions far beyond the scope of the authority vested in me as the military commander, decisions which are neither solely political nor solely military, but which must provide on the highest international levels an answer to the obscurities which now becloud the unsolved problems raised by Red China's undeclared war in Korea.⁵

REINFORCEMENTS AND REPLACEMENTS

The JCS finally decided, in late January, to send two of the partially trained National Guard divisions (the 40th and 45th Divisions) to the Far East and informed MacArthur in late February that he would receive the units sometime in April. He was told, however, that they must stay in Japan and could not be used in Korea. In addition, the actions taken by the Administration in early December to expand the Army were successful, and by the end of February the Department of Army was able to promise MacArthur that by the end of April he would receive all the trained replacements he required.⁶

SEARCH FOR POLICY

The success of the Eighth Army in February and March again forced the Administration to consider just what policy

⁵ Ibid., pp. 182-83.

⁶ Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XVIII-22 through XVIII-30.

they were going to follow in Korea. They had the immediate problem of whether to let the current directives stand on operations north of the 38th parallel (the U.N. Commander still had authorization to conduct operations north of the parallel as he deemed fit), and the longer term problem of what course of action the United States and the United Nations should take concerning the settlement of the Korean War. Neither the State Department nor the Defense Department seemed desirous of making the first move; each was waiting for the other to make a clear statement on what was to be done in Korea.

Early in the discussions between the two departments, the State Department enumerated five courses of action which the United Nations might adopt concerning Korea: (1) an all out effort to conquer all of Korea and to unite the country by force; (2) complete withdrawal from Korea; (3) extend the action to Communist China thereby reducing the pressure on Korea; (4) acceptance of a military stalemate at approximately the present battle line; or (5) settlement through negotiation. The State Department was aware that the adoption of the first three courses of action would have to be on the initiative of the United Nations, but that the fourth (stalemate) could be accomplished without either side taking the initiative. As a result of previous refusals by the communists to negotiate, the initiative for the last course of action lay chiefly with the communists. The JCS stated that they could not effectively choose any one of the courses until they were

told what political course the United States was going to follow. They also commented that they were very uncertain as to what political actions the United Nations was going to adopt and therefore recommended no change to the current mission of an aggressive defense.⁷ Thus, nothing was really settled and no directions were sent to MacArthur.

On the question of whether to cross the 38th parallel or not, the Administration also did not furnish any clear guidance for the field commander. MacArthur had asked the JCS for instructions on their policy for crossing the parallel in force and stated that even if he found he could cross the parallel in strength, he would check with Washington first. The Secretary of State believed that any significant movement of U.N. forces north of the 38th parallel would not meet with the approval of the other members of the United Nations and would reduce the chance of any negotiated peace. The Defense Department originally agreed in principle with Acheson's proposal not to conduct a general advance past the 38th parallel (except for local tactical advantages) but the JCS objected that this proposal was not consistent with the current announced political objectives of the United Nations (i.e., unification). From a military point of view the JCS said any directive restricting MacArthur's freedom of movement north of the parallel was not sound and that it gave the enemy forces an unfair advantage as the communists would

⁷Ibid., pp. XIX-1 through XIX-3.

probably not observe any U.N prohibition on crossings of the 38th parallel. The JCS stated that MacArthur needed this freedom, if for no other reason, to preserve the safety of his command. The JCS stand convinced the Secretary of Defense that until the political course of action had been determined that no change in MacArthur's directives should be issued.⁸

RENEWED NEGOTIATION ATTEMPTS

Encouraged by the success of the Eighth Army the Administration renewed their efforts to arrange a negotiated settlement of the Korean War. The State and Defense Department planners were in agreement that they were now in a much stronger position to negotiate a political settlement. They felt the Chinese, as a result of their recent losses, might be more likely to negotiate, and that the current front lines, being at about the original border between the two Koreas, might be acceptable to both sides as a compromise, in that it approximately the prewar status. As a result the State Department drafted a statement that they recommended be made by the President, on behalf of the United Nations Command. On 21 March the draft was approved by the President and was submitted for comment to the other nations providing forces to the unified command. According to Dean Acheson the responses were favorable.⁹ The draft statement read as follows:

⁸Ibid., pp. XIX-8 through XIX-10.

⁹Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1969), p. 518.

I make the following statement as Chief Executive of the Government requested by the United Nations to exercise the Unified Command in Korea, and after full consultation with United Nations Governments contributing combat forces in support of the United Nations in Korea.

United Nations forces in Korea are engaged in repelling the aggressions committed against the Republic of Korea and against the United Nations.

The aggressors have been driven back with heavy losses to the general vicinity from which the unlawful attack was first launched last June.

There remains the problem of restoring international peace and security in the area in accordance with the terms of the Security Council resolution of June 27, 1950. The spirit and principles of the United Nations Charter require that every effort be made to prevent the spread of hostilities and to avoid the prolongation of the misery and the loss of life.

There is a basis for restoring peace and security in the area which should be acceptable to all nations which sincerely desire peace.

The Unified Command is prepared to enter into arrangements which would conclude the fighting and ensure against its resumption. Such arrangements would open the way for a broader settlement for Korea, including the withdrawal of foreign forces from Korea.

The United Nations has declared the policy of the world community that the people of Korea be permitted to establish a unified, independent and democratic state.

The Korean people are entitled to peace. They are entitled to determine their political and other institutions by their own choice and in response to their own needs.

The Korean people are entitled to the assistance of the world community in repairing the ravages of war - assistance which the United Nations is ready to give and for which it has established the necessary machinery. Its member nations have already made generous offers of help. What is needed is peace, in which the United Nations can use its resources in the creative tasks of reconstruction.

It is regrettable that those who are opposing the United Nations in Korea have made so little response to the many opportunities which have been and continue to be afforded for a settlement in Korea.

A prompt settlement of the Korean problem would greatly reduce international tension in the Far East and would open the way for the consideration of other problems in that area by the processes of peaceful settlement envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations.

Until satisfactory arrangements for concluding the fighting have been reached, United Nations military action must be continued.¹⁰

On the 20th of March, in an effort to keep MacArthur informed as to the Administration's plans, the JCS sent a message to MacArthur to warn him of the proposed Presidential announcement and to ask what recommendations he had as to his operations during this negotiation period. It should be noted that the message to MacArthur did not specify what the President was going to say, but only generally what sort of a message the President was going to deliver. The JCS message to MacArthur read:

State planning Presidential announcement shortly that, with clearing of bulk of South Korea of aggression, United Nations now prepared to discuss conditions of settlement in Korea. Strong U.N. feeling persists that further diplomatic effort toward settlement should be made before any advance with major north of the 38th parallel. Time would be required to determine diplomatic reactions and permit new negotiations that may develop. Recognizing that parallel has no military significance, State has asked JCS what authority you should have to permit sufficient freedom of action for the next few weeks to provide security for U.N. forces and maintain contact with enemy. Your recommendations desired.¹¹

MacArthur immediately replied and recommended that he not have any further military restrictions placed upon his command. He pointed out that with his current restrictions on naval and air action, and the enemy's great ground potential, it was infeasible anyway to try and clear North Korea. He felt that

¹⁰Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, Vol. II, Years of Trial and Hope (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1956), pp. 439-40.

¹¹U.S. Senate, Compilation of Certain Published Information on the Military Situation in the Far East, p. 183.

his present directives were satisfactory and should not be changed.¹²

Before the President could make his announcement General MacArthur, on 24 March, issued a public statement (which he professed to have made up before the receipt of the 20 March JCS message) which was dropped in leaflet form behind the enemy lines and published in the press. In the lengthy message MacArthur enumerated the successes of his command and said that this clearly evidenced the non-infallibility of the Chinese Communists and how overrated their military forces were and how inadequate their industrial base was. He pointed out that this had been accomplished in spite of the "inhibitions which now restrict activity of the United Nations forces and the corresponding military advantages which accrue to Red China."¹³ He then went on and clearly threatened Red China (in violation of his instructions from the JCS) by stating:

The enemy therefore must by now be painfully aware that a decision of the United Nations to depart from its tolerant effort to contain the war to the area of Korea through expansion of our military operations to his coastal areas and interior bases would doom Red China to the risk of imminent military collapse.¹⁴

After chiding the communists about raising extraneous issues in the settlement of the Korean problem, such as Formosa and

¹²Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. XIX-18 and XIX-19.

¹³U.S. Senate, Compilation of Certain Published Information on the Military Situation in the Far East, p. 184.

¹⁴Tbid.

the seating of Red China in the United Nations, MacArthur said that in other than "the military area of the problem where issues are resolved in the course of combat, the fundamental questions continue to be political in nature and must find their answer in the diplomatic sphere." He ended his message by saying:

Within the area of my authority as military commander, however, it should be needless to say I stand ready at any time to confer in the field with the commander in chief of the enemy forces in an earnest effort to find any military means whereby the realization of the political objectives of the United Nations in Korea, to which no nation may justly take exceptions, might be accomplished without further bloodshed.¹⁵

ADMINISTRATION REACTIONS

When the President saw MacArthur's message he was deeply shocked and angered. As President Truman recalled in his Memoirs:

This was a most extraordinary statement for a military commander of the United Nations to issue on his own responsibility. It was an act totally disregarding all directives to abstain from any declarations on foreign policy. It was in open defiance of my orders as President and as Commander in Chief. This was a challenge to the authority of the President under the Constitution. It also flouted the policy of the United Nations.

By this act MacArthur left me no choice - I could no longer tolerate his insubordination.

In effect, what MacArthur was doing was to threaten the enemy with an ultimatum - intimating that the full preponderance of Allied power might be brought to bear against Red China. To be sure, he said that this would be a political decision, but considering his high office, the world would assume that he had advance knowledge that such a decision would be made.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 441-42.

As the President had predicted the message brought quick queries from the allies as to whether there was going to be a change in American policy. The President and his advisors believed that MacArthur's preemptive message completely invalidated the proposed Presidential offer of negotiation, and as a result never released the announcement.

The President called a conference the same day with his advisors to discuss the MacArthur message. All agreed that the 6 December directive on the clearing of public statements had been very explicit and that this message was in definite violation of the directive. The President directed that the Defense Department send MacArthur a message reminding him of the 6 December directive. General Bradley sent the following personal message to MacArthur on the same day:

The President has directed that your attention be called to his order as transmitted on 6 December 1950. In view of the information given you 20 March 1951 any further statements by you must be coordinated as prescribed in the order of 6 December.

The President has also directed that in the event Communist military leaders request an armistice in the field, you immediately report that fact to the JCS for instructions.¹⁷

In both his Reminiscences and in his testimony before the Senate hearings, MacArthur was to maintain that the issuance of the message was well within his prerogatives as

¹⁷Ibid., p. 443. It is interesting to note that this message, though more direct than the 6 December directive, was still not very censorious in content and did not adequately convey the anger and displeasure of the President at MacArthur's violation of policy. I had the opportunity on 10 May 1972 to talk personally with General Collins about this message. He stated that the JCS were not then aware of the extent of the President's displeasure nor of the President's personal decision to relieve MacArthur.

the Theater Commander, and that there had been no intent by him to embarrass, harass, or influence any actions which the President or the United Nations were taking to negotiate with the communists.¹⁸

THE MAC ARTHUR - MARTIN LETTERS

As stated earlier, the 24 March MacArthur message which sabotaged the President's negotiation plans caused President Truman to say, "I could no longer tolerate his insubordination." After thinking about the problem for several days, the President made up his mind that MacArthur had to go. Before he took any positive action though, another incident occurred which was to cause the President to take action to relieve MacArthur from all of his command duties.

This final incident was an exchange of letters between Representative Joseph W. Martin (minority leader in the house) and General MacArthur. On 8 March, Mr. Martin had written the following personal letter to MacArthur:

My Dear General: In the current discussion on foreign policy and overall strategy many of us have been distressed that, although the European aspects have been heavily emphasized, we have been without the views of yourself as Commander in Chief of the Far Eastern Command.

I think it is imperative to the security of our Nation and for the safety of the world that policies of the United States embrace the broadest possible strategy and that in our earnest desire to protect Europe we not weaken our position in Asia.

Enclosed is a copy of an address I delivered in Brooklyn, N.Y., February 12, stressing this vital point

¹⁸MacArthur, Reminiscences, pp. 388-89. See also U.S. Senate, Military Situation in the Far East, pp. 69-72. General Ridgway made the following observation concerning

and suggesting that the forces of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek on Formosa might be employed in the opening of a second Asiatic front to relieve the pressure on our forces in Korea.

I have since repeated the essence of this thesis in other speeches, and intend to do so again on March 21, when I will be on a radio hook-up.

I would deem it a great help if I could have your views on this point, either on a confidential basis or otherwise. Your admirers are legion, and the respect you command is enormous.

May success be yours in the gigantic undertaking which you direct.¹⁹

You will note that Mr. Martin had qualified his request for MacArthur's personal views as either on a confidential basis or otherwise. The views stated in Martin's letter, of course, were the same as MacArthur had already publicly stated and he readily answered Mr. Martin's letter. You will note that he did not indicate whether the views were on a confidential basis or not:

Dear Congressman Martin: I am most grateful for your note of the 8th forwarding me a copy of your address of February 12. The letter I have read with much interest, and find that with the passage of years you have certainly lost none of your old-time punch.

My views and recommendations with the respect to the situation created by Red China's entry into war against us in Korea have been submitted to Washington in most complete detail. Generally these views are well known and clearly understood, as they follow the conventional pattern of meeting force with maximum counterforce as we have never failed to do in the past. Your view with respect to the utilization of the Chinese forces on Formosa is in conflict with neither logic nor this tradition.

It seems strangely difficult for some to realize that here in Asia is where the Communist conspirators have

MacArthur's message, ". . . No one in possession of the facts could have been so naive as to imagine MacArthur was either unaware or innocent of any desire openly to oppose the President." Ridgway, The Korean War, pp. 154-55.

¹⁹U.S. Senate, Compilation of Certain Published Information on the Military Situation in the Far East, p. 185.

elected to make their play for global conquest, and that we have joined the issue thus raised on the battlefield; that here we fight Europe's war with arms while the diplomats there still fight it with words; that if we lose the war to communism in Asia the fall of Europe is inevitable, win it and Europe most probably would avoid war and yet preserve freedom. As you pointed out, we must win. There is no substitute for victory.²⁰

Mr. Martin, noting that MacArthur had not labeled the letter as confidential, chose to read the General's reply in the House, and therefore into the Congressional Record, on 5 April 1951. In his Reminiscences MacArthur stated that he, "attached little importance to the exchange of letters, which on my part was intended to be merely a polite response couched in general terms as to convey only a normal patriotic desire for victory."²¹ A few pages later he was to complain, "at this critical juncture, Congressman Martin, for some unexplained reason and without consulting me, released my letter."²² During his testimony before the Senate hearings on his relief he stated:

. . . my letter to Congressman Martin was merely a routine communication such as I turn out by the hundreds. It made so little impression upon me, as I said yesterday, that when I heard one of my staff officers saying there had been some criticism of what I had said to him, I had to go into the files. I didn't even recall what the circumstance was.²³

²⁰Ibid., pp. 185-86.

²¹MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 386.

²²Ibid., p. 389.

²³U.S. Senate, Military Situation in the Far East, p. 113.

THE PRESIDENT ACTS

The public disclosure of MacArthur's reply to Mr. Martin did, however, make an impression on President Truman and his advisors. On the following day he called a meeting of his advisors to discuss the actions of General MacArthur. Present at the meeting were Averell Harriman, Dean Acheson, George Marshall, and Omar Bradley. As President Truman relates in his Memoirs, "I put the matter squarely before them. What should be done about General MacArthur?"²⁴ Mr. Harriman said, without qualification, that MacArthur should have been relieved several years before. General Marshall said he needed more time to think about it and cautioned that if MacArthur was relieved that they (the Administration) might have trouble with Congress over military appropriations. General Bradley said that MacArthur, from a military discipline point of view, had been insubordinate and should be relieved from command but said he wished to consult with the remainder of the JCS before he would make a final recommendation. Mr. Acheson told the President he felt that MacArthur should go but believed that he (the President) should have the unanimous advice of the JCS before he acted and cautioned that this must be handled in a very careful manner. He warned

²⁴Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 447. The group did not know it, nor were they to find out until the decision was reached, that Mr. Truman had already made up his mind to relieve MacArthur after the 24 March fiasco.

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making such statements public. He had taken independent action in proposing publicly to negotiate an armistice directly with the enemy field commander despite the fact that he knew the President had such a proposal under consideration at a governmental level.

3. The JCS felt the military in our country must be controlled by civilian authority. General MacArthur's statements and actions ran counter to this basic principle.²⁶

On the 9th the advisors met again and unanimously recommended to the President that General MacArthur be relieved of all of his commands. The President then directed General Bradley to prepare orders directing MacArthur to turn over his several commands to General Ridgway. By that afternoon the orders were prepared and the President had signed them. The President had originally planned to send the relief messages to MacArthur by having Secretary of the Army Pace (who was in Korea visiting General Ridgway and who knew nothing about the actions taking place in Washington) hand them personally to General MacArthur. It was decided to send the message through Department of State channels to Ambassador Muccio in Pusan to deliver to Mr. Pace. It was then planned that Pace would go to Tokyo the following day and deliver the message to MacArthur at 1000 hours on 12 April (2000 hours 11 April, Washington time). The message, however, due to a power problem, did not get to Pace as anticipated. An acknowledgement of the message had still not been received, when late on the evening of the 10th

²⁶ J. Lawton Collins, War in Peacetime (Boston: Hittlin Co., 1969), p. 284.

(Washington time) the Administration received information that the relief had been "leaked" to the press and would be in print the following morning. The President decided to move the announcement forward about 20 hours and directed a special press conference be held at the White House at 0100 hours on the 11th. The press conference was timed to coincide with the delivery, this time through military channels, of the message to MacArthur. The message, however, did not reach MacArthur until a half an hour after he had been informed by an aide (through a call by his wife) that the message relieving him had been on the radio. The members of the joint committee conducting the Senate hearings into the relief of MacArthur, were almost unanimous in castigating the Administration for the manner in which the relief was handled. General Collins commented in his book, "It was a sad and deplorable way to terminate the military career of a distinguished soldier."²⁷ The text of the message to the press read as follows:

With deep regret, I have concluded that General of the Army Douglas MacArthur is unable to give his whole-hearted support to the policies of the United States Government and of the United Nations in matters pertaining to his official duties. In view of the specific responsibilities imposed upon me by the Constitution of the United States and the added responsibility which has been entrusted to me by the United Nations, I have decided that I must make a change of command in the Far East. I have, therefore, relieved General MacArthur of his commands and have designated Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway as his successor.

²⁷Ibid., p. 286.

Full and vigorous debate on matters of national policy is a vital element in the constitutional system of our free democracy. It is fundamental, however, that military commanders must be governed by the policies and directives issued to them in the manner provided by our laws and Constitution. In time of crisis, the consideration is particularly compelling.

General MacArthur's place in history as one of our greatest commanders is fully established. The Nation owes him a debt of gratitude for the distinguished and exceptional service he has rendered his country in posts of great responsibility. For that reason I repeat my regret at the necessity for the action I feel compelled to take in this case.²⁸

THE COMMAND PASSES TO RIDGWAY

Mr. Pace and General Ridgway finally learned about General MacArthur's relief late on the 11th and the next day flew to Tokyo. Ridgway described his final meeting with MacArthur as follows:

. . . I had a natural human curiosity to see how he had been affected by his peremptory removal from his high post. He was entirely himself - composed, quiet, temperate, friendly, and helpful to the man who was to succeed him. He made some allusions to the fact that he had been summarily relieved, but there was no trace of bitterness or anger in his tone. I thought it was a fine tribute to the resilience of this great man that he could accept so calmly, with no outward sign of shock, what must have been a devastating blow to a professional soldier standing at the peak of his career.²⁹

MacArthur then briefed Ridgway on some of the more pressing problems of the command and wished him well on his new

²⁸Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 449.

²⁹Ridgway, The Korean War, p. 266.

assignment. After almost 15 years Douglas MacArthur was going home.

THE HERO'S RETURN

Both the Korean and Japanese Governments paid tribute to General MacArthur prior to his departure from Japan, but the method of the dismissal caused MacArthur to forgo the customary formal change of command ceremony and a farewell address to his command. Upon landing in the United States the General was treated to a tumultuous greeting by the citizens of San Francisco. On the 19th of April the General addressed a joint session of Congress. His talk was interrupted on at least twenty occasions by the applause of the Congressmen and Senators. It was a highly emotional speech, stating in essence the same things MacArthur had said both privately and publicly before. The main points of his message were: the importance of Asia in respect to Europe; the holding of the littoral defense line, especially Formosa; the threat of Communist China; the great gains made by Japan; disavowal of any plans or desire to fight a land battle in continental China; a repeat of the four means of retaliating against mainland China; a claim that the JCS had supported him in all of his views concerning the conduct of the Korean War; that the objective of war was victory and that anything but total victory was appeasement. To the standing ovation of both houses of Congress, the General ended his address with the following:

I am closing my 52 years of military service. When I joined the Army even before the turn of the century, it was the fulfillment of all my boyish hopes and dreams. The world has turned over many times since I took the oath on the plain at West Point, and the hopes and dreams have long since vanished. But I still remember the refrain of one of the most popular barrack ballads of that day which proclaimed most proudly that -

"Old soldiers never die; they just fade away." and like the old soldier of that ballad, I now close my military career and just fade away - an old soldier who tried to do his duty as God gave him the light to see that duty.

Good-by.³⁰

On the following day the citizens of New York gave General MacArthur the greatest ticker-tape parade in its history.

THE SENATE HEARINGS

Starting on 3 May 1951, hearings were held before the combined Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees of the U.S. Senate under the Chairmanship of Senator Richard B. Russell of Georgia. The hearings lasted for seven weeks, received over two million words of testimony from fourteen witnesses, and resulted in a printed record of 3,691 pages (which did not include additional testimony which was deleted from the record because of security reasons).³¹ The combined committee was charged to "conduct an inquiry into the military

³⁰U.S. Senate, Compilation of Certain Published Information on the Military Situation in the Far East, pp. 195-200.

³¹Collins, War in Peacetime, p. 288.

situation in the Far East and the facts surrounding the relief of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur from his assignments in that area."³² In opening the hearings Senator Russell stated:

In his address to the Congress on April 19 the general said:

"I do not stand here as an advocate for any partisan cause, for the issues are fundamental and reach quite beyond the realms of partisan considerations. They must be resolved on the highest plane of national interest if our course is to prove sound and our future protected."

I wholeheartedly associate myself with that sentiment. I hope these hearings may be conducted from beginning to end in that spirit. If they are not conducted with the single purpose of serving the national interest in this hour of crisis, we will fail those who have given us their confidence³³ and depend upon us for leadership and guidance.

The non-partisanship of the inquiry, called for by the Chairman, did not materialize. The only exception from the partisan behavior of the combined committee was the extremely courteous questioning of General MacArthur (the first witness) and the laudatory comments from all members of the committee, Republican and Democrat alike, on MacArthur's accomplishments. During the remainder of the inquiry the questions developed mainly on partisan lines: the Republican members castigating the Administration on the MacArthur relief in particular, and its Far Eastern policy in general; and the Democratic members being much less antagonistic and trying to draw out the advantages and background of the Administration's policy in

³² U.S. Senate, Military Situation in the Far East, p. 1.

³³ Ibid., p. 2

the Far East and the reasons for the MacArthur relief. Much more time was spent in investigating the Far East policy than the MacArthur relief. The witnesses which appeared before the committee, in order of their appearance, were: General MacArthur (May 3-5); General Marshall (May 7-14); General Bradley (May 15-24)³⁴; General Collins (May 25-26); General Vandenberg (May 28-29); Admiral Sherman (May 30-31); Mr. Adrian S. Fisher, Legal Advisor, Department of State (May 30); Dean Acheson (June 1-9); Lieutenant General A.C. Wedemeyer, United States Army (June 11-13); Louis A. Johnson, former Secretary of Defense (June 14-15); Vice Admiral Oscar C. Badger, USN, Commander, Eastern Sea Frontier (June 19); Major General Patrick J. Hurley, Honorary Reserve, USA (June 20-21); Major General David G. Barr, USA (June 22); and Major General Emmett O'Donnell, Jr., USAF (June 25).

The last regularly scheduled meeting of the combined committees was on 27 June. The Chairman, realizing that there could be no consensus report from the committee due to the wide divergence of opinion of the members, had the committee vote on, and approve a "Statement Affirming Faith in Country." This document pointed out to the world that the United States

³⁴ During Bradley's testimony the committee had a two day argument on whether General Bradley, as a personal advisor to the President, should be forced to testify about personal talks with the President or whether he could exercise executive immunity. Senator Russell originally ruled the Bradley could refuse to answer on the basis of being a confidential advisor, but the ruling was not accepted without considerable heated debate and hard feelings among the Senators.

political system was a viable one and could endure self-criticism. The statement pointed out to the free world that in spite of our arguments over techniques we still had an overriding objective of defending freedom. It then went on to warn the communist world not to be deceived by our searching review of our global strategy, that we still would protect world peace.

A final meeting of the combined committees was held on 17 August 1951 where it was decided:

That the Committees transmit and report to the Senate for its information the hearings and the records with their appendixes; that the committee file no further report; that no views or conclusions be denominated as the majority or minority views or conclusions, but that members be permitted before September 1 to file their views and conclusions with the chairman, and that said views be printed in the appendix.³⁵

In accordance with the above passage, eight Republican senators filed a report of "Individual Views of Certain Members." In this report they listed thirty areas of agreement where they stated there was no disagreement between all concerned with the hearings and eighteen areas of disagreement that the signers felt were proved to their satisfaction. They ended their report by listing the following eight conclusions:

- (1) The inquiry was in the public interest.
- (2) The removal of General MacArthur was within the constitutional powers of the President but the circumstances were a shock to the national pride.
- (3) There was no serious disagreement between General MacArthur and the Joint Chiefs of Staff as to military strategy in Korea.

³⁵U.S. Senate, Military Situation in the Far East, p. 3162.

(4) Our Armed Forces have acquitted themselves with gallantry.

(5) The administration's Far East policy has been a catastrophic failure.

(6) The Foreign Policy of the United States since the middle 1940's has been based on expediency rather than the principles of liberty and justice.

(7) The United States should never again become involved in war without the consent of the Congress.

(8) Cessation of hostilities, based on a restoration of the status quo at the 38th parallel will be a victory for aggression.³⁶

During the course of the hearings (May 22) Senator Tobey, Republican Senator from New Hampshire, made an impassioned speech against continuing the hearings. He felt the hearings had degenerated into a politically biased proceeding, which was accomplishing little but helping the enemies with too much information, and the asking of many "piddling" questions of little importance. He commented:

When we get all through Mr. MacArthur will still be deposed from his position, Mr. Marshall will still be the men in charge of the defense of this country, the Joint Chiefs will still be the same as they are now, but some men will have gratified their passion and desire to ask pointed questions to try to stir the animals up, and man, while the situation goes on from bad to worse, and men are dying in Korea.³⁷

The value of the hearings probably lies somewhere in between Senator Tobey's outburst, and the minority eight's statement that the hearings were in the public interest. There is no doubt that the enemies of the United States obtained much strategic information from the "security cleared"

³⁶Ibid., p. 3565.

³⁷Ibid., p. 947.

reports of the committee. It is also true that many of the questions were not germane to the subject of the inquiry, were repetitious, and sometimes asked with a partisan bias. But on the other hand the hearings provide a permanent and public record of what had and was happening in the Far East. In addition to providing a good source for information on this period of history, the hearings point out the different views taken by members of Congress and the Administration when faced with a limited war.

Public Reaction

When Truman fired MacArthur the public reacted vociferously. Many of the messages and letters to the President were most uncomplimentary. At the outset, the mail was two to one against the President's actions. However, as the issue grew less emotional, and the hearings continued on and on, the mails changed to support the President's decision.³⁸

³⁸Merne Arthur Harris, "The MacArthur Dismissal--A Study in Political Mail" (unpublished Doctor's Dissertation, University of Iowa, 1966), p. 327. (Copy located at Truman Library.)

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSIONS

The principal causes for the relief of General MacArthur from all of his duties in the Far East in April of 1951 were:

1. A lack of adequate understanding and accord between the Truman Administration and General MacArthur as to the basic policy to be pursued in the Korean conflict.
2. General MacArthur's questionable participation in international politics.
3. General MacArthur's use of the public media to voice his dissatisfaction with the Administration's policies in the Far East.

COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

Basic to the problem of inadequate understanding between the Truman Administration and General MacArthur was the lack of effective communication between the two parties. This lack of communication was in large part the result of divergent backgrounds and aspirations of the President and his principal advisors on the one hand, and General MacArthur on the other.

Since shortly after the end of World War II, President Truman's Administration had been following national policies of containment of Russia and of collective security. Both of these policies were directed toward maintaining the status quo of the "free world" and protecting its freedom from the coercions and infiltrations of the communist bloc. The United States and the United Nations intervention on behalf of the Republic of Korea, upon their being invaded by North Korea, was merely an extension of these policies. Basic to the Administration's decision to come to the military assistance of the South Korean government however, were the qualifying factors: (1) that the military response would be limited in nature; and (2) that the United States would, as a matter of policy, avoid actions which could cause overt intervention by Red China or Russia, and possible escalation of the conflict into World War III. The Administration, though meeting the challenge of the armed aggression of the communists, did not want to become embroiled in a large scale operation in Korea. This would have tied down their limited military resources at the expense of the military buildup in Western Europe, the area in which the Administration believed the real threat still lay. The Administration chose to work through the aegis of the United Nations to add international legitimacy to their response, and to prove the viability of collective security. They were willing to accept the resulting restrictions on their unilateral freedom of action. This policy of limiting the scope of the war in Korea was normally considered

by the Administration when sending directives to General MacArthur on the conduct of the Korean War.

General MacArthur, on the other hand, did not share the Administration's desire to effect a limited response in Korea once the decision to intervene had been made. All of his military experience told him that once a military response had been decided upon, the conduct of the war should be left to military professionals and all means available to the military commander could, and should be, utilized to achieve total victory. Any course of action which did not use all of the force available, in MacArthur's parlance, was appeasement.¹ As a result, General MacArthur interpreted the messages somewhat differently than the Administration had intended.

Another factor bearing on the communication problem was MacArthur's long absence from the United States. Mr. Truman was convinced that MacArthur's fourteen years in the Orient, without any visits to the United States, had caused the General to lose some of his contact with the country and its people and that ". . . his thoughts were wrapped up in the East."² Efforts prior to the Korean War by the Administration and the Congress to convince General MacArthur to

¹U.S. Senate, Military Situation in the Far East, p. 39. In his testimony before the Senate hearings in May 1951 inquiring into his relief, General MacArthur commented, ". . . seems to me to introduce a new concept into military operations - the concept of appeasement, the concept that when you use force, you can limit that force."

²Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, Vol. II, Years of Trial and Hope (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1956), pp. 362-363.

visit the United States had not been effective.

MacArthur and the JCS

In general the communications between the Administration and Tokyo were channeled through the JCS, specifically the Executive Agent for the JCS for military operations in the Far East, the Army Chief of Staff, General J. Lawton Collins. It must be realized that there was a vast disparity between the seniority, age, and fame of the members of the JCS and General of the Army Douglas MacArthur. While the JCS was essentially the senior headquarters to General MacArthur and provided him with his direction and policy, General MacArthur outranked every member of the JCS, was 13 to 19 years older than its members, and had achieved much greater prominence, at an earlier age than any member of the JCS. This generation gap between the JCS and MacArthur may have caused the JCS to cede to MacArthur considerably more deference than their relative positions in the chain of command would dictate. On many occasions, especially prior to the Chinese intervention, it seemed that the JCS rather meekly acquiesced to the demands of General MacArthur and only mildly reproved, or ignored, his lack of total adherence to their directives. It was also evident in several of MacArthur's protests to the JCS that he felt his military opinion was of more value than that of the JCS and intimated that Presidential approval of JCS directives should be obtained before he should comply with them. There were also several instances where

MacArthur failed to keep the JCS adequately informed as to his plans or the situation thus placing the JCS in the unfortunate position of reacting to MacArthur rather than giving him timely guidance and direction.

Another factor which must be considered in the communications between the JCS and General MacArthur was that on several occasions the JCS, not being aware of the extent of President Truman's displeasure, did not adequately convey the Administration's dissatisfaction to General MacArthur. There is a good possibility, had the JCS been more forceful in their communication to General MacArthur, that some of the ambiguity could have been reduced.

Administration Efforts to Improve Communication

The Administration made many attempts to improve the understanding between Washington and Tokyo but only achieved limited success. The August 1950 visit by W. Averell Harriman to Tokyo to discuss Far East policy, with specific emphasis on Formosa, was one of the first attempts by President Truman to enlighten MacArthur by giving the General ". . . a first-hand account of the political planning in Washington . . ." ³ but MacArthur interpreted the purpose of the visit as Harriman's being sent by the President to learn the Far Eastern situation from MacArthur. In spite of the President's public statement after the Harriman visit, indicating that he

³Ibid., p. 353.

and MacArthur were in accord on policy, the published reports of the two attendees (Harriman and MacArthur) did not reflect that agreement, in fact, was achieved.

Also, visits by members of the JCS to MacArthur in Tokyo only met with limited success. During the first visit to Tokyo in July, 1950 Generals Collins and Vandenberg did not arrive at a real understanding with General MacArthur as to priorities for the buildup, and as to the requirements for the maintenance of the General Reserve Force in the United States. During their visit to Tokyo in August, 1950 General Collins and Admiral Sherman failed to convince General MacArthur as to the importance of keeping the JCS informed as to his plans. When General Collins visited MacArthur in early December, 1950 after the Chinese intervention, he found that General MacArthur's recommendations were in wide divergence from the Administration's stated policies. Collins also did not agree with MacArthur as to the criticality of the situation in Korea. General Collins' and General Vandenberg's final visit to General MacArthur in January, 1951 showed even a wider divergence of interpretations of U.S. and U.N. goals in Korea between the Administration and MacArthur. Attempts by the two generals to further explain U.S. policy to General MacArthur and to reemphasize the importance, and reasons for, the restrictions on his operations were also unsuccessful.

The Wake Island conference was another example of the failure of the Administration to come to a common understanding with MacArthur on the policies to be followed in the Far East. Even though President Truman and General MacArthur both stated after the conference that they were in agreement, events soon proved that they were still far apart on the basic policy to follow in Korea. This was the only face-to-face visit between President Truman and General MacArthur.

In a like manner the letter that President Truman wrote to General MacArthur explaining his reasons for requiring the General to withdraw his VFW message, and his letter to MacArthur explaining the Administration's reasons for not accepting his proposals to widen the war in Korea, were interpreted by General MacArthur differently than intended by the President.

POLICY DIFFERENCES

Limited War Versus Total Victory

The primary policy difference between the Administration and General MacArthur on the conduct of the war, as mentioned earlier, were their views on expanding the scope of the war in Korea. During the first stages of the war both Tokyo and Washington had been in general agreement on the conduct of the war in Korea. However, as the U.N. forces approached the Manchurian border the restrictions on MacArthur's actions more and more became a point of contention between MacArthur and Washington. MacArthur felt that the

inviolability of the Manchurian border seriously hampered his interdiction program against the communists and jeopardized the safety of his forces. The advent of the Chinese Communist intervention in November 1950 widened the split between the field commander and Washington. To MacArthur, the Administration's refusal to permit him to use his air and naval assets against mainland China, and the continued neutralization of Chaing's forces on Formosa, were not in consonance with the American tradition of total victory.⁴ Even with the intervention of the Chinese Communists, the Administration remained convinced that the war still must be limited in scope, and that overreaction on its part would alienate its allies and possibly result in an all-out war. As General Bradley put it so succinctly in his testimony before the Senate hearings about MacArthur's policy, "Frankly, in the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, this strategy would involve us in the wrong war, at the wrong place, at the wrong time, and with wrong enemy."⁵

Priorities

The United States had been in an extremely poor military posture at the beginning of the Korean War. The blame for this lack of military readiness can be shared equally by

⁴U.S. Senate, Military Situation in the Far East, p. 3557. During his address to the Joint Session of Congress on 19 April 1951 MacArthur had said, "But once war is forced upon us, there is no other alternative than to apply every available means to bring it to a swift end. War's very objective is victory - not prolonged indecision. In war indeed, there can be no substitute for victory."

⁵Ibid., p. 732.

the Administration, the Congress, and the public. The build-up was effective. Not only were the forces in Korea supplemented, but an even larger parallel buildup in forces for Europe was accomplished. The latter was a source of friction between the Administration and General MacArthur. It was MacArthur's belief, as well as the belief of many in Congress, that the priority for the military buildup should go to the Far East where the actual fighting was going on. He argued, that while he believed fully in the defense of Europe, he did not feel it should be at the expense of risking defeat in Korea. MacArthur maintained that the use of the additional troops in Korea could provide good combat training for their subsequent use in Europe. The Administration, on the other hand, considered that the real threat to their national security was in Western Europe and further believed that Korea was not the place to fight a major war. As a result the Administration gave more priority to the military buildup in Western Europe, and the reestablishment of the General Reserve, than the buildup of the forces in Korea.

PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

The chain of command between the United Nations and General MacArthur, as Commander in Chief, U.N. Command, was deliberately structured so that there would be no direct contact between the field commander and the United Nations. All communications between MacArthur and the U.N. were to be through his normal chain of command with the JCS and the

Executive Branch of the U.S. Government. The JCS had insisted on this arrangement because they believed direct contact between the U.S. commander and the U.N., or its member nations, could raise serious operational difficulties. The State Department was in agreement with this arrangement because they did not want General MacArthur to deal directly with foreign nations, nor to be a spokesman of foreign policy for the United States. General MacArthur did however, on several occasions, take actions which caused the American public, and the allies, to seriously wonder who was determining U.S. foreign policy - General MacArthur or President Truman.

MacArthur's Visit to Formosa

General MacArthur stated that his visit to Formosa in late July of 1950 was strictly military in nature, its only purpose being to determine Formosa's military capabilities for defense. Notwithstanding, the world press interpreted the visit as a denial of the President's policy of strict neutralization of Formosa and implied that MacArthur favored a more aggressive policy with regard to Formosa.

VFW Letter

The publication, without Administration approval, of General MacArthur's message to the annual encampment of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, with its implied criticism of the Administration's policy with regard to Formosa, was particularly damaging to Administration efforts in clarifying the

U.S. policy on Formosa to the United Nations. Even though General MacArthur had been careful to label the views in the message as his personal views, his position as U.N. and U.S. Commander in the Far East caused foreign nations to wonder just what the U.S. policy with regards to Formosa really was. The subsequent withdrawal of the message, under the President's direction, did little to allay the questions of these nations.

MacArthur's Negotiation Offer

On 20 March 1951 the JCS informed MacArthur that the President was going to propose negotiation to the Chinese Communists as soon as he had coordinated it with the allies. On 24 March, before the President could make his announcement, General MacArthur issued a public statement, which was published in the world press and dropped in leaflet form behind the enemy lines, offering to negotiate anytime with the commander in chief of the enemy forces. In the message he clearly threatened Red China (in violation of his instructions from the JCS) that the war could be extended to their coastal areas and interior bases. The MacArthur statement brought quick queries from the allies as to whether there was going to be a change in American policy. The President and his advisors believed that MacArthur's preemptive message completely invalidated the proposed Presidential offer of negotiation, and as a result the announcement was never released.

PRIVATE VERSUS PUBLIC DISAGREEMENT

General MacArthur had every right, and indeed an inherent obligation, to voice his disagreement with directives, or policy, which he believed were not in the best interest of his command, or of the United States. There were, however, prescribed channels through which these disagreements should be voiced, excluding the public media and congressional correspondence. Once MacArthur had exhausted his channels for argument with his superiors (and his arguments were carried all the way to the President) this writer feels he had only two legitimate courses available: (1) to ask to be relieved of his commands and voice his objections as a private citizen through whatever channels he deemed appropriate; or (2) to accept the decisions of his superiors and carry them out to the best of his ability within the prescribed restrictions. General MacArthur choose not to do either. He retained his command and proceeded to carry his argument with the Administration to the public via the press. Two Presidential directives failed to quiet MacArthur's public disagreement with the Administration.

A study of MacArthur's public statements shows that many are very similar, and in some instances almost identical. This fact may lend credence to MacArthur's claim, during the Senate hearings, that his ". . . letter to Congressman Martin was merely a routine communication such as I turn out by the hundreds."⁶

⁶Ibid., p. 113.

RESOLUTIONS OF DIFFERENCES: MAC ARTHUR'S RELIEF

General MacArthur must share the blame with the Administration for the serious reverses suffered by the U.N. Command when the Communist Chinese intervened in the Korean War in November and December of 1950. His insistence on adhering to the original plan for the clearing of North Korea, in spite of the growing indications of massive Chinese intervention, helped lead to the near disaster suffered by the Eighth Army and X Corps during that period. Rather than accepting any blame for the reverses, MacArthur steadfastly insisted that the fault lay with the Administration's directives to him and the limitations placed upon his operations by higher headquarters. This inability on MacArthur's part to accept any responsibility for the reverses, coupled with his public proclamations on the rightness of his actions and the unfairness of the Administration's restrictions on his actions, strained the relations between Washington and MacArthur to the breaking point.

General MacArthur was not just a great general, he was also an accomplished statesman and politician. MacArthur had earned his reputation as a great soldier and leader during his almost fifty years of service. His outstanding performance in rebuilding Japan after World War II is a testimony to his administrative ability and his agility as a statesman. As a result of his outstanding record, and his recognized brilliance, MacArthur, over the years, had built up an

inordinately keen sense of his own destiny and infallibility. In general, they were well justified, but MacArthur had made, and could make mistakes. In 1932, as Army Chief of Staff, General MacArthur made the following comment:

The national strategy of any war - that is the selection of national objectives and the determination of the general means and methods to be applied in attaining them, as well as the development of the broad policies applicable to the prosecution of war - are decisions that must be made by the head of state, acting in conformity with the expressed will of the Congress. No single departmental head, no matter what his particular function or title, could or should be responsible for the formulation of such decisions. For example, in every war the United States has waged, the national objective to be attained has involved the Army in land attacks against areas held by the enemy. In every instance missions have been prescribed for the Navy that had in view the assisting and facilitating of the Army's efforts. Yet in no case could these missions and objectives have been properly prescribed by the Secretaries of War and Navy acting in unison or by a single supersecretary acting for both. The issues involved were so far-reaching in their effects, and so vital to the life of the Nation, that this phase of coordinating Army and Navy effort could not be delegated by the Commander in Chief to any subordinate authority. Any such attempt would not constitute delegation, but rather abdication.

General MacArthur made the same mistake that he had counseled against twenty years before, and President Truman did not abdicate the decision-making authority. There was no choice but to relieve General MacArthur from his commands in the Far East.

⁷Quote from the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1932, filed by the Military Aide on April 21, 1952, OF 584, Truman Papers, Truman Library.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX: CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS¹

June 25, 1950. North Korean forces crossed the 38th parallel and invaded the Republic of Korea.

June 25, 1950. The United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution calling for the immediate cessation of hostilities and withdrawal of the North Korean forces to the thirty-eighth parallel.

June 26, 1950. The President announced that in accordance with the Resolution of the Security Council, "The United States will vigorously support the effort of the Council to terminate this serious breach of the peace."

June 27, 1950. The President ordered United States air and sea forces to give the Korean Government troops cover and support; also ordered the Seventh Fleet to prevent any attack on Formosa and to see that the Chinese Government on Formosa cease operations against the mainland.

June 27, 1950. The United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution recommending that the members of the United Nations furnish assistance to the Republic of Korea in order to repel the attack and restore peace and security in Korea.

June 30, 1950. The President authorized U.S. Air Force bombing missions on military targets north of the 38th parallel, and authorized General MacArthur to use ground troops in the Korean conflict.

July 7, 1950. The United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution recommending that all United Nations members provide military forces and offer assistance to a unified command under the United States, and requested the United States to designate the commander of such forces.

July 8, 1950. In response to the request of the United Nations Security Council that the United States designate the commander of United Nations forces in Korea, the President designated General MacArthur to command the United Nations forces in Korea.

¹Source for this Appendix is Chronology prepared by White House Staff upon relief of General MacArthur, April 1951, OF 1397, Folder No. 584 (January-April 1951), Truman Library.

July 19, 1950. The President, in a Message to Congress, re-stated the United States position concerning the neutralization of Formosa, announcing that the United States has no designs on Formosa and that its future status will be determined without resort to force.

July 31, 1950. General MacArthur visited Formosa and conferred with Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.

August 1, 1950. General MacArthur issued statement announcing coordination with Chiang Kai-shek.

August 6-8, 1950. W. Averell Harriman, Special Assistant to the President conferred with General MacArthur in Tokyo on the Far Eastern situation.

Mr. Harriman was accompanied by Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway, at that time Deputy Chief of Staff, and by the following general officers: Lieutenant General Lauris Norstad, Major General Roger Ramey and Major General Charles Cabell.

August 25, 1950. Ambassador Warren Austin, in a letter to Trygve Lie, emphasized that the future status of Formosa should be settled by the United Nations without resort to force. The President, in a letter to Ambassador Austin, dated August 27, 1950, reiterated the United States' adherence to this course with respect to Formosa.

August 27, 1950. General MacArthur, without prior knowledge of the President, the Joint Chiefs of Staff or the Department of State, sent a message to the Veterans of Foreign Wars regarding unilateral action by the United States to keep Formosa out of enemy hands. This message came at a time when the President and Ambassador Austin were negotiating with the United Nations on the status of Formosa.

August 28, 1950. The President, through the Secretary of Defense, ordered General MacArthur to withdraw his message to the Veterans of Foreign Wars. General MacArthur withdrew the statement, but not before it had been distributed in the September 1, issue of U.S. News and World Report: the General MacArthur statement was then reprinted in newspapers throughout the country.

September 1, 1950. The President, in a radio address to the Nation, outlined the U.S. objectives in Korea and the Far East, reiterating that the future of Formosa "should be settled by international action, and not by the decision of the United States," and that "The mission of the Seventh Fleet is to keep Formosa out of the conflict."

September 15, 1950. United Nations forces landed at Inchon and proceeded to capture Seoul.

October 7, 1950. The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for "a unified, independent and democratic Government in the sovereign State of Korea."

October 15, 1950. The President with military and diplomatic advisers flew to Wake Island to meet with General MacArthur and his assistants. The decision covered both the military action in Korea and the United States and United Nations objectives in the Far East.

October 17, 1950. The President, in an address in San Francisco, reviewed his Wake Island conference with General MacArthur and reiterated the United States foreign policy with particular reference to the Far East.

October 24, 1950. In an address before the United Nations General Assembly, the President stressed that the aggression in Korea was a direct challenge to the principles of the United Nations; and that the action of the United Nations to check aggression by the use of force was "dramatic evidence that the Charter works."

Early November, 1950. Chinese Communist units are identified in the Korean fighting. As American units approached the lower reaches of the Yalu River, the Chinese Communists trapped regiments of the 1st Cavalry Division and inflicted heavy losses; other units of the 24th Division withdrew rapidly to avoid encirclement. Soon the Chinese broke contact, and General MacArthur congratulated the troops for escaping from a trap.

November 6, 1950. In a special communique, General MacArthur said his forces had encountered "a new and fresh army," intended to trap and destroy the United Nations forces in Korea. General MacArthur claimed that this design had been defeated by "timely detection and skillful maneuvering." General MacArthur stated that the Chinese struck from "the privileged sanctuary of the adjacent Manchurian border."

November 7, 1950. General MacArthur made a special report to the United Nations dated November 6, reviewing the evidence that Chinese communist forces were operating in Korea.

November 24, 1950. In announcing a win-the-war offensive in a special communique, General MacArthur stated: "The isolating component of our pincer, our Air Forces of all types, have for the last three weeks, in a sustained attack of model coordination and effectiveness, successfully interdicted enemy lines of support from the north so that further reinforcement therefrom has been sharply curtailed and essential supplies markedly remitted."

November 25, 1950. In a communique, General MacArthur stated that "an air reconnaissance behind the enemy's line and along the entire length of the Yalu River border showed little sign of hostile military activity." A news story the same day related that General MacArthur stated to his Corps commanders that he hoped United States troops could be removed from Korea by Christmas.

Late November, 1950. The Chinese Communists struck the South Korean II Corps, and delivered a heavy blow down the center of the peninsula. The American 2nd Division suffered severe casualties. Three other American divisions, including the 1st Marine Division, had to fight their way, in a bloody battle, out of a trap in order to reach the coast for evacuation.

November 30, 1950. In a cable to Arthur Krock of the New York Times, General MacArthur stated that "every major step" in his battle plans had been "previously reported and fully approved" (in Washington). General MacArthur stated that "every strategic and tactical movement" of his U.N. Command had been "in compliance with the directives."

November 30, 1950. In a statement read at his press conference, the President reemphasized the United Nations aspects of the conflict in Korea, stating that despite recent reverses caused by the Chinese communist intervention, the United States would continue to work in the United Nations for concerted action to halt the aggression in Korea.

November 30, 1950. In response to a question at his press conference, the President said that General MacArthur was doing a good job and had not exceeded his authority.

December 1, 1950. The President, in a message to Congress, again emphasized that the Chinese aggression was a direct threat to the United Nations and would be met by United Nations action.

December 1, 1950. General MacArthur, following a defeat by the Chinese Armies, stated in a cable to Hugh Baillie of the United Press: "It is historically inaccurate to attribute any degree of responsibility for the onslaught of the Chinese communist armies to the strategic course of the campaign itself."

December 1, 1950. In a statement to U.S. News and World Report, in the issue dated December 8, 1950, General MacArthur explained his defeat as resulting largely from military odds "without precedent in military history." In response to the question of whether the estimates for his offensive were based "on the belief that Chinese strength was not more than 60,000," General MacArthur replied, "The tactical course taken was the only one which the situation permitted."

December 5-6, 1950. The President, in a directive to Cabinet members and other officials, which was transmitted through the Joint Chiefs of Staff to General MacArthur, specified that statements, speeches, and press releases concerning foreign policy or military policy should be cleared in advance with the Department of State and the Department of Defense.

January 4, 1951. The Joint Chiefs of Staff suggested that South Korean troops be armed with available weapons, and requested General MacArthur's comments and recommendations on how South Korean troops could be profitably organized, trained and utilized.

January 6, 1951. General MacArthur advised against arming South Korean troops, and suggested that the weapons be used to equip Japanese police.

February 1, 1951. The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution calling upon the Chinese Communists to cease hostilities against the United Nations forces, and reaffirmed the policy of the United Nations to "bring about a cessation of hostilities in Korea and the achievement of United Nations objectives in Korea by peaceful means."

March 7, 1951. General MacArthur complained of "abnormal military inhibitions" and said "military stalemate" seemed inevitable.

March 20, 1951. The Joint Chiefs of Staff informed General MacArthur that the President was planning to announce that the United Nations was prepared to discuss conditions of settlement in Korea.

March 24, 1951. General MacArthur, without prior clearance, announced publicly that he would talk with the Chinese Commander in the field to consider peace. General MacArthur's announcement was coupled with an implied threat to bomb China.

March 24, 1951. The Joint Chiefs of Staff informed General MacArthur that "The President has directed that your attention be called to his order as transmitted 6 December 1950," and that any further statements must be coordinated as prescribed in the order of 6 December.

April 5, 1951. Representative Joseph W. Martin, Jr. (Republican, Massachusetts) released on the floor of the House of Representatives an exchange of correspondence with General MacArthur. Representative Martin suggested to General MacArthur "a second Asiatic front to relieve the pressure on our forces in Korea," using 800,000 Formosan troops of Chiang Kai-shek. In response, General MacArthur stated in a letter dated March 20, 1951, "Your view with respect to

the utilization of the Chinese forces in Formosa is in conflict with neither logic nor this tradition."

April 10, 1951. The President relieved General MacArthur of all his commands, effective at once.

April 11, 1951. The President, in an address to the Nation, reviewed the United States policy of limiting the war to Korea in order to prevent World War III, stating that "the cause of world peace is more important than any individual."

April 19, 1951. In an address to a joint meeting of Congress, General MacArthur implied the Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed with his views, and he called for neutralizing the sanctuary protection given the enemy north of the Yalu, intensification of economic blockade against China, imposition of Naval blockade against China coast, removal of restrictions on air reconnaissance and use of Chinese forces on Formosa, etc.

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